

NOV. 1905

15 CENTS

AINSLIE'S

THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS



Drawn by
C. Allan Gilbert

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AS OTHERS SEE US

AINSLIE'S for August comes to us as a very delightful midsummer number.—*Charleston News and Courier*.

AINSLIE'S for August has stories about golf, yachting, racing and other sports. A charming vacation story of the Great Lakes is "The Marvel Maid," by Beatrice Hanscom.—*Detroit Tribune*.

AINSLIE'S for August has, as one of its vacation number stories, a romantic tale by Beatrice Hanscom, which has for its setting the somewhat novel one laid among the islands of one of the Great Lakes.—*Buffalo Sunday News*.

The July issue furnishes another constellation of short stories, at least six of them being uncommonly clever and captivating. David Graham Phillips' really great novel, "The Deluge," is drawing to a close. The verse also in the July AINSLEE'S is of remarkable insight and artistic worth.—*Cincinnati Times-Star*.

AINSLIE'S for August has for its novelle and leading feature a story with a distinctly French atmosphere. It is "The Adventures of Joujou," and is by Edith Macvane. The tale deals with the apparently irrepressible conflict between the old *régime* and the new, the irreconcilable hostility between the French aristocrat and the French peasant.—*Washington Post*.

Kathryn Jarboe opens the July AINSLEE'S with a delightfully rollicking novelle, called "A Gentleman of the Highways." The short stories of this number are very clever. Baroness von Hutten, M. H. Vorse, Sarah Guernsey Bradley, Harriet Whitney Durbin and Una Hudson being among writers of fiction represented. And the verse for this number is from the graceful pens of Theodosia Garrison, John Vance Cheney, Charlotte Becker and Frank Dempster Sherman.—*New Orleans Picayune*.

The short stories in AINSLEE'S for July are up to the usual standard.—*Canadian Bookseller*.

AINSLIE'S for July comes to hand with a typically summer-girl cover and a list of remarkably fine short stories.—*Oakland Enquirer*.

Kathryn Jarboe has a delightful eighteenth-century romance in AINSLEE'S for July, called "A Gentleman of the Highways." It is a love story primarily, but it has a stirring plot, and the narrative is not allowed to lag for an instant.—*Port Huron (Mich.) Times*.

AINSLIE'S MAGAZINE for July contains Kathryn Jarboe's "A Gentleman of the Highways." David Graham Phillips continues a graphic chapter of "The Deluge." Tales by Harriet Whitney Durbin and others; "A Serenade," by Frank Dempster Sherman, and recent comments on new books are features of the issue.—*Denver News-Times*.

AINSLIE'S has, as usual, a love story that is unique in plot, presenting at the same time a very vital picture of real life. It is real, because the characters are portrayed as genuine, everyday men and women, with emotions and passions and weaknesses like the men and women we meet and know. It is by the Baroness von Hutten, who has recently made a good deal of a hit with her new novel, "Pam." The title of the story is "The Boy Man."—*Louisville Courier-Journal*.

Kathryn Jarboe writes the novelette for the July number of AINSLEE'S, a story of love and a merry masquerade which runs well. David Graham Phillips' serial, "The Deluge," has reached the fifteenth chapter, and is doing him credit. For the rest, there is a pleasing miscellany of stories and verse, which entertains and amuses—and that is what we want of a magazine in summer.—*Detroit Free Press*.

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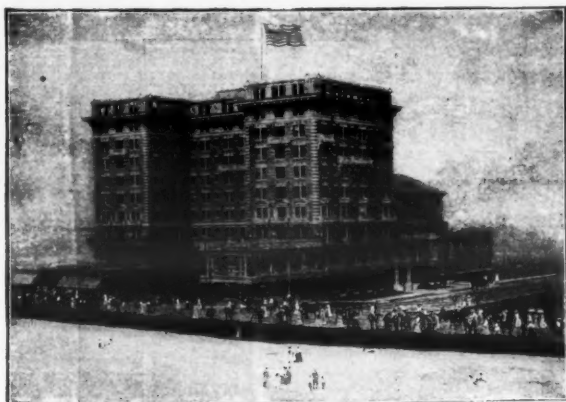
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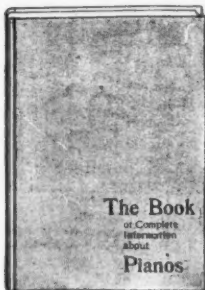
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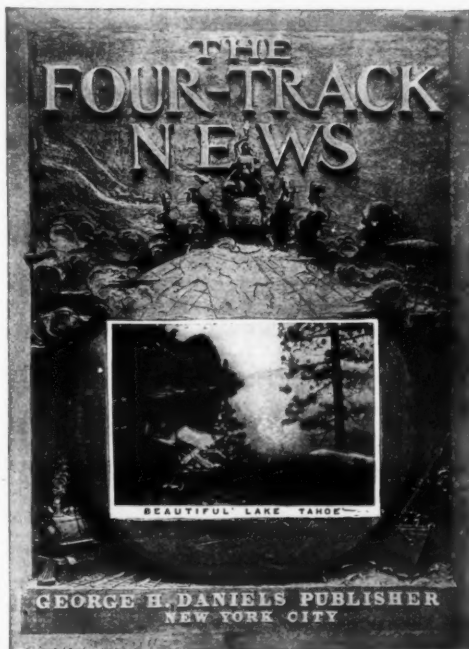
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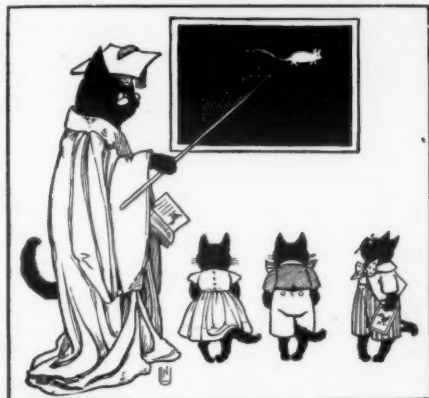
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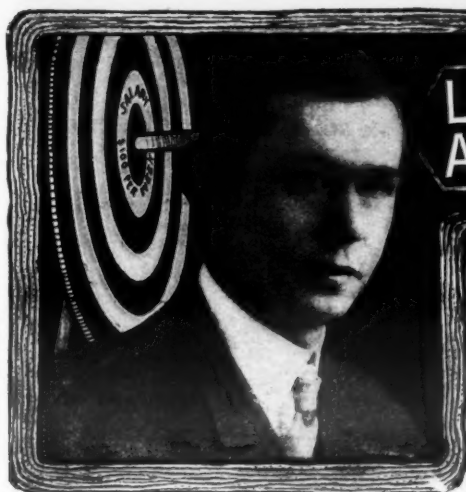
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THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS

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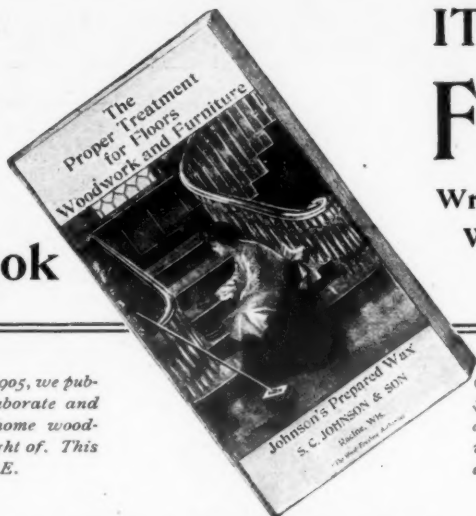
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VOL. XVI.

NOVEMBER, 1905.

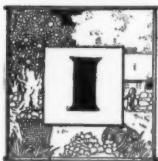
No. 4.



THE CASTLECOURT DIAMOND CASE

BY Geraldine Bonner

(Statement of Sophy Jeffers, lady's maid to the Marchioness of Castlecourt.)



HAD been in Lady Castlecourt's service two years when the Castlecourt diamonds were stolen. I am not going to give an account of how I was suspected and cleared.

That's not the part of the story I'm here to set down. It's about the disappearance of the diamonds that I'm to tell, and I'm ready to do it to the best of my ability.

We were in London, at Burridge's Hotel, for the season. Lord Castlecourt's town house at Grosvenor Gate was let to some rich Americans, and for two years now we had stayed at Burridge's. It was the third of April when we came to town, my lord, my lady, Chawlmers, my lord's man, and myself. The children had been sent to my lord's aunt, Lady Mary Cranbury, she who's unmarried and lives at Cranbury Castle, near Worcester.

Lord Castlecourt didn't like going to the hotel at all. Chawlmers used to tell me how he'd talk sometimes.

Chawlmers has been with my lord ten years, and was born on the estate at Castlecourt Marsh Manor. But my lord generally did what my lady wanted, and she was not at all partial to the country. She'd say to me—she was always full of her jokes:

"Yes, it's an excellent place, the country—an excellent place to get away from, Jeffers. And the further away you get, the more excellent it seems."

My lady had been born in Ireland, and lived there till she was a woman grown. It's not for me to comment on my betters, but I've heard it said she didn't have a decent frock to her back till old Lady Bundy took her up and brought her to London. Her father was a clergyman, the Reverend McCarren Duffy, of County Clare, and they do say he hadn't a penny to his fortune, and that my lady ran wild in cotton frocks and with holes in her stockings till Lady Bundy saw her. I've heard tell that Lady Bundy said of her she'd be the most beautiful woman in London since the Gunnings—whoever they were—and just brought her up to town and fitted her out from top to toe. In a month she was the talk of the season, and before it was over she was be-

trothed to the Marquis of Castlecourt, who was a great match for her.

But she was the beggar on horseback you hear people talk about. Lord Castlecourt wasn't what would be called a millionaire, but he gave her more in a month than she'd had before in five years, and she'd spend it all and want more. It seemed as if she didn't know the value of money. If she'd see a pretty thing in a shop she'd buy it, and if she had not got the ready money they'd give her the credit, for, being the Marchioness of Castlecourt, all the shop people were on their knees to her, they were that anxious to get her patronage. Then when the bills would come in she would be quite surprised and wonder how she had come to spend so much, and hide them from Lord Castlecourt. Afterward she'd forget all about them, even where she'd put them.

Lord Castlecourt was so fond of her he'd have forgiven her anything. They'd been married five years when I entered my lady's service, and he was as much in love with her as if he'd been married but a month. And I don't blame him. She was the prettiest lady, and the most coaxing, I ever laid eyes on. She might well be Irish; there was blarney on her tongue for all the world, and money ready to drop off the ends of her fingers into any palm that was held out. There was no story of misfortune but would bring the tears to her eyes, and her purse to her hand. Generous and soft-hearted she was to every creature that walked. No one could be angry with her long. I've seen Lord Castlecourt begin to scold her and end by laughing at her and kissing her. Not but what she respected him and loved him. She did both, and she was afraid of him, too. No one knew better than my lady when it was time to stop trifling with my lord and be serious.

It was Lord Castlecourt's custom to go to Paris two or three times every year. He had a sister married there of whom he was very fond, and he and her husband would go off shooting boars to a place with a name I can't

remember. My lady was always happy to go to Paris. She'd say she loved it, and the theaters and the shops—though what she could see in it I never understood. A dirty, messy city, and full of men ready to ogle an honest, Christian woman as if she was what half the women look like that go prancing along the streets. My lady spent a good deal of her time at the dress-maker's, and she and I were forever going up to top stories in little, silly lifts that go up of themselves. I'd a great deal rather have walked than trusted myself to such unsafe, French contrivances—underhand, dangerous things, that might burst at any moment, I say.

The year before the time I am writing of we went to Paris, as usual, in March. We stopped at the Bristol, and stayed one month. My lady went out a great deal, and betweenwhiles was as usual at what they call there "*couturières*," at the jewelers', or in the shops of the Rue de la Paix. She also bought from Bolkonsky, the furrier, a very smart jacket of Russian sable that I'll be bound cost a pretty penny. When we went back to London for the season, her beauty and her costumes were the talk of the town. Old Lady Bundy's maid told me that Lady Bundy went about saying:

"And but for me she'd be the mother of the red-headed larrykins of an Irish squireen," which didn't seem to me nice talk for a lady.

We spent that summer at Castlecourt Marsh Manor, very quietly, as was my lord's wish. My lady did not seem in as good spirits as usual, which I set down to the country life that she always said bored her. Once or twice she told me that she felt ill, which I'd never known her to say before, and one day in the late summer I discovered her in tears. She did not seem to be herself again till we went to Paris in September. Then she brightened up and was soon in higher spirits than ever. She was on the go continually—often would go out for lunch and not be back till it was time to dress for dinner. She enjoyed herself in Paris very much,

she told me. And I think she did, for I never saw her more animated, almost excited, with high spirits and success.

The following spring we left Castle-court Marsh Manor, and, as I said before, came to Burridge's on April the third. The season was soon in full swing, and my lady was going out morning, noon and night. There was no end to it, and I was worn out. When she was away in the afternoon I'd take forty winks on the sofa, and have Sara Dwight, the housemaid of our rooms, bring me a cup of tea, when she'd sometimes take one herself, and we'd gossip a bit over it.

If I'd known what an important person Sara Dwight was going to turn out, I'd have taken more notice of her. But, unfortunately, thieves don't have a mark on their brow like Cain, and Sara was the last girl anyone would have suspected was dishonest. All that I ever thought about her was that she was a neat, civil-spoken girl, who knew her betters and her elders when she saw them. She was quick on her feet, modest and well-mannered; not what you'd call good-looking—too pale and small for my taste, and Chawlmers quite agreed with me. The one thing I noticed about her were her hands, which were white and fine, like a lady's. Once when I asked her how she kept them so well, she laughed and said, not having a pretty face, she tried to have pretty hands.

"Because a girl ought to have something pretty about her, oughtn't she, Miss Jeffers?" she says to me, quiet and respectful as could be.

I answered, as I thought it was my duty, that beauty was only skin deep, and if your character was honest your face would take care of itself.

She looked down at her hands and smiled a little and said:

"Yes, I suppose that's true, Miss Jeffers. I'll try to remember it. It's what every girl ought to feel, I'm sure."

Sara Dwight had the greatest admiration for Lady Castlecourt. She'd manage to be standing about in doorways and on the stairs when my lady passed down to go to dinner and to the opera.

Then she'd come back and tell me how beautiful my lady was and how she envied me being her maid. While she was talking she'd help me tidy up the room, and sometimes—because she admired my lady so—I'd let her look at the new clothes from Paris as they hung in the wardrobe. Sara would gape with admiration over them. She spoke a little about my lady's jewels, but not much. I'd have suspected that.

It was in the fifth week after we came to town—to be exact, on the afternoon of the fourth of May—that the diamonds were stolen. As I've been so badgered and questioned and tormented about it, I've got it all as clear in my head as a photograph, just how it was and just what time everything happened.

That evening my lady was going to dinner at the Duke of Duxbury's. It was to be a great dinner; a prince and a prime minister, and I don't know what all besides. My lady was to wear a new gown from Paris, and the diamonds. She told me when she went out what she would want and when she would be back. That was at four, and I was not to expect her in till after six.

Some time before that I got her things ready, the gown laid out and the diamonds on the dressing table. They were kept in a leather case of their own and then put in a dispatch box that shut with a patent lock. When we traveled I always carried this box; that is, when my lady used it. A good deal of the time it was at the bankers'. Lord Castlecourt was very choice about the diamonds. Some of them had been in his family for generations. The way they were set now—in a necklace with pendants, the larger stones surrounded by smaller ones—had been a new setting made for his mother. My lady wanted them changed, and I remember that Lord Castlecourt was vexed with her, and she couldn't pet and coax him back into a good humor for some days.

One of the last things that I did that afternoon while arranging the dressing table was to open the dispatch box and take the leather case out. Though it was May, the evenings were very long.

I turned on the electric lights and, unclasping the case, looked at the necklace. The stones didn't seem to me as bright as usual, and I had the idea that I'd suggest to my lady that she send them to Court & Gillis' and have them cleaned. They were wonderfully brilliant stones when they were cleaned.

I was standing this way when Chawlmers comes to the side door of the room—the whole suite was connected with doors—and asks me if I could remember the number of the boot-makers where my lady bought her riding boots. Some friends of Chawlmers wanted to know the address. I couldn't at first remember it, and I was standing this way, trying to recollect, when I heard the clock strike six. I told Chawlmers I'd get it for him. I was certain it was in my lady's desk, and I put the case down on the bureau, and Chawlmers and I together went into the sitting room—the door open between us and my lady's room—and looked for it. We found it in a minute, and Chawlmers was writing it down in his pocketbook when I thought I heard—so light and soft you could hardly say you'd heard anything—a rustle like a woman's skirt in the next room. For a second I thought it was my lady, and I jumped, for I'd no business at her desk, and I knew she'd be vexed and scold me.

Chawlmers didn't hear a thing, and looked at me astonished. Then I ran to the door and peeped in. There was no one there, and I thought, of course, I'd been mistaken.

We didn't leave the room directly, but stood by the desk talking for a bit. When I told this to the detectives one of the papers said it showed "how deceptive even the best servants were." As if a valet and a lady's maid couldn't stand about for a moment of talk! Poor things! We work hard enough most of the time, I'm sure. And that we weren't long standing there idle can be seen from the fact that I heard half-past six strike. I was for urging Chawlmers to go then—Lady Castlecourt might be in at any moment—but he hung about, following me into my lady's

room, helping me draw the curtains and turn on all the lights, for my lady can't bear to dress by daylight.

It was nearly seven o'clock when we heard the sound of her skirts in the passage. Chawlmers slipped off into his master's rooms, shutting the door quietly behind him. My lady was looking very beautiful. She had on a blue hat trimmed with blue and gray hydrangeas, and underneath it her hair was like spun gold and her eyes looked soft and dark. It never seemed to tire her to be always on the go. But I'd thought lately she'd been going too much, for sometimes she was pale, and once or twice I thought she was out of spirits, the way she'd been in the country last summer.

She seemed so to-night, not talking as much as usual. There were some letters for her on the corner of the dressing table, and I could see her face in the glass as she read them. One made her smile, and then she sat thinking and biting her lip, which was as red as a cherry. She seemed to me to be preoccupied. When I was making the side *ondulations* of her hair—which everybody knows is a most critical operation—she jerked her head and said suddenly she wondered how the children were. I never before knew my lady to think about the children when her hair was being attended to.

She was sitting in front of the dressing table, her toilet complete, when she stretched out her hand to the leather case of the diamonds. I was looking at the reflection in the mirror, thinking that she was as perfect as I could make her. She, too, had been looking at the back of her head, and still held the small glass in one hand. The other she reached out for the diamonds. The case had a catch that you had to press, and I saw, to my surprise, that she raised the lid without pressing this. Then she gave a loud exclamation. There were no diamonds there!

She turned round and looked at me, and said:

"How odd! Where are they, Jeffers?"

I felt suddenly as if I was going to

fall dead, and afterward, when my lady stood by me and said it was nonsense to suspect me, one of the things she brought up as a proof of my innocence was the color I turned and the way I looked at that moment.

"Jeffers!" she said, suddenly rising up quick out of her chair, and then, without my saying a word, she went white and stood staring at me.

"My lady, my lady," was all I could falter out, "I don't know, I don't know."

"Where are they, Jeffers? What's happened to them?"

My voice was all husky, like a person's with a cold, as I stammered:

"They were in the case an hour ago."

My lady caught me by the arm, and her fingers gripped tight into my flesh.

"Don't say they're stolen, Jeffers!" she cried out. "Don't tell me that. Lord Castlecourt would never forgive me. He'll never forgive me. They're worth thousands and thousands of pounds. They *can't* have been stolen!"

She spoke so loud they heard her in the next room, and Lord Castlecourt came in. He was a tall gentleman, a little bald, and I can see him now in his black clothes with the white of his shirt bosom gleaming, standing in the doorway looking at her. He had a surprised expression on his face, and was frowning a little, for he hated anything like loud talking or a scene.

"What's the matter, Gladys?" he said. "You're making such a noise I heard you in my room. Is there a fire?"

She made a sort of grasp at the case and tried to hide it. Chawlmers was in the doorway behind my lord, and I saw him staring at her and trying not to. He told me afterward she was as white as paper.

"The diamonds," she faltered out. "Your diamonds, your family's, your mother's."

Lord Castlecourt gave a start and seemed to stiffen. He did not move from where he was, but stood rigid, looking at her.

"What's the matter with them?" he

said, quick and quiet, but not as if he was calm.

She threw the case she had been trying to hide on the dressing table. It knocked over some bottles and lay there open and empty. My lord sprang at it, took it up and shook it.

"Gone?" he said, turning to my lady.

"Stolen, do you mean?"

"Yes, yes, yes," she said, like that, three times, and then she fell back in the chair and put her hands over her face.

Lord Castlecourt turned to me.

"What's this mean, Jeffers? You've had charge of the diamonds."

I told him all I knew, and as well as I could, what with my legs trembling that they'd scarce support me and my tongue dry as a piece of leather. When I got toward the end my lady interrupted me, crying out:

"Herbert, it isn't my fault, it isn't! Jeffers will tell you I've taken good care of them. I've not been careless or forgetful about them, as I have about other things. I *have* been careful of them. It isn't my fault, and you mustn't blame me."

Lord Castlecourt made a sort of gesture toward her to be still. I could see it meant that. He kept the case, and, going to the door, locked it.

"How long have you been in these rooms?" he said, turning round on me with the key in his hand.

I told him, trembling and almost crying. I had never seen my lord look so terribly stern. I don't know whether he was angry or not, but I was afraid of him, and it was for the first time, for he'd always been a kind and generous master to me and the other servants.

"Oh, my lord," I said, feeling suddenly weighed down with dread and misery, "you surely don't think I took them?"

"I'm not thinking anything," he said. "You and Chawlmers are to stay in this room and not move from it till you get my orders. I'll send at once for the police."

My lady turned round in her chair and looked at him.

"The police?" she said. "Oh, Her-

bert, wait till to-morrow! You're not even sure yet that they are stolen."

"Where are they, then?" he says, quick and sharp. "Jeffers says she saw them in that case an hour ago. They are not in the case now. Do either you or she know where they are?"

I was down on my knees picking up the bottles that had been knocked over by the empty jewel case.

"Not I, God knows," I said, and I began to cry.

"The matter must be put in the hands of the police at once," my lord said. "I'll have the hotel policeman here in a few minutes and the rooms searched. Jeffers and Chawlmers and their luggage will be searched to-morrow."

My lady gave a sort of gasp. I was close to her feet and I heard her. But for myself I just broke down and, kneeling on the floor with the overturned bottles spilling cologne all around me, cried worse than I've done since I was in short frocks.

"Oh, my lady, I didn't take them! I didn't. You know I didn't," I sobbed out.

My lady looked very miserable.

"My poor Jeffers," she said, and put her hand on my shoulder. "I'm sure you didn't. If I'd only a sixpence in the world I'd stake that on your honesty."

Lord Castlecourt didn't say anything. He went to the bell and pressed it. When the boy answered it he gave him a message in a low tone, and it didn't seem five minutes before two men were in the room. I did not know till afterward that one was the manager and the other the hotel policeman. I stopped my crying the best I could, and heard my lord telling them that the diamonds were gone, and that Chawlmers and I had been the only people in the room all the afternoon. Then he said he wanted them to communicate at once with Scotland Yard and have a capable detective sent to the hotel.

"Lady Castlecourt and I are going to dinner," he said, looking at his watch. "We will have to leave at the latest within the next twenty minutes."

Lady Castlecourt cried out at that:

"Herbert, I don't see how I can go

to that dinner. I am altogether too upset, and, besides, it will be too late. It's eight o'clock now."

"We can make the time up in the carriage," my lord said, and he went into the next room with the policeman, where they talked together in low voices. I helped my lady on with her cloak, and she stood waiting, her eyebrows drawn together, looking very pale and worried. When my lord came back he said nothing, only nodded to my lady that he was ready, and without a word they left the room.

I tried to tidy the bureau and pick up the bottles as well as I could, and every time I looked at the door into the sitting room I saw that policeman's head peering round the doorpost at me.

That was an awful night. I did not know it till afterward, but both Chawlmers and I were under what they call "surveillance." I did not know either that Lord Castlecourt had told the policeman he believed us to be innocent—that we were of excellent character, and nothing but positive proof would make him think either of us guilty. All I felt as I tossed about in bed was that I was suspected, and would be arrested and probably put in jail. Fifteen years of honest service in noble families wouldn't help me much if the detectives took it into their heads I was guilty.

The next morning we heard about the disappearance of Sara Dwight, and things began to look brighter. Sara had left the hotel at a little after seven the evening before, speaking to no one and carrying a small portmanteau. When they came to examine her room and her box they found a jacket and skirt hanging on the wall, some burnt papers in the grate, and the box almost empty, except for some cheap cotton underclothes and a dirty wadded quilt put in to fill up. Sara had given no notice, and had not at any time told any of her fellow servants that she was dissatisfied with her place or wanted to leave.

That morning Mr. Brison, the Scotland Yard detective, had us up in the sitting room asking us questions till I was fair muddled and didn't know truth

from lies. Lord Castlecourt and my lady were both present, and Mr. Brison was for very politely asking my lady questions till she got quite angry with him and said she wasn't at all sure the diamonds were stolen, they might have been mislaid and would turn up somewhere. Mr. Brison was surprised, and asked my lady if she had any idea where they were liable to turn up, and my lady looked annoyed and said it was a silly question, and that she "wasn't a clairvoyant."

Three days after this Mr. John Gilsey, who is a detective, and, I have heard since, a very famous gentleman, was engaged by Lord Castlecourt to "work upon the case." Mr. Gilsey was very soft spoken and pleasant. He did not muddle you as Mr. Brison did, and it was very easy to tell him all you knew or could remember, which he always seemed anxious to hear. He had me up in the sitting room twice, once alone and once with Mr. Brison, and they'd ask me a host of questions about Sara Dwight. I told them all I could think of, and when I came to her hands and how they were white and fine, like a lady's, I saw Mr. Brison look at Mr. Gilsey and raise his eyebrows.

"Does it seem to you," he says, scribbling words in his notebook, "that this sounds like Laura the Lady?"

And Mr. Gilsey answered:

"The manner of operating sounds like her, I must admit."

"She was in Chicago when last heard of," says Mr. Brison, stopping in his scribbling, "but we've information within the last week that she's left there."

"Laura the Lady is in London," Mr. Gilsey remarked, looking at his finger nails. "I saw her three weeks ago at Earls Court."

Mr. Brison got red in the face, and puffed out his lips as if he was going to say something but decided not to. He scribbled some more and then, looking at what he had written, as if he was reading it over, says:

"If that's the case, there's very little doubt as to who planned and executed this robbery."

"That's a very comfortable state of affairs to arrive at," says Mr. Gilsey, "and I hope it's the correct one." And that was all he said that time about what he thought.

After this we stayed on at Burridge's for the rest of the season, but it was not half as cheerful or gay as it had been before. My lord was often moody and cross, for he felt the loss of the diamonds bitterly, and my lady was out of spirits and moped, for she was very fond of him, and to have him take it this way seemed to upset her. Mr. Brison or Mr. Gilsey was constantly popping in and murmuring in the sitting room, but they got no further on. At least, there was no talk of finding the diamonds, which was all that counted.

This is all I know of the theft of the necklace. What happened at that time, and what Mr. Gilsey calls "the surrounding circumstances of the case," I have tried to put down as clearly and as simply as possible. I have gone over them so often, and been forced to be so careful, that I think they will be found to be quite correct in every particular.

(Statement of Lilly Bingham, known in England as Laura Brice, in the United States as Frances Latimer, to the police of both countries as Laura the Lady, besides having recently figured as a housemaid at Burridge's Hotel, London, under the alias of Sara Dwight.)

I never was so glad of anything in my life as to get out of that beastly hole, Chicago. I'll certainly never go back, there unless there is an inducement big enough to compensate for the elevated railroad, the lake, the noise, the winds, the restaurants, the climate and the people! Ugh, what a nightmare!

England's the country for me, and London is the focus of it. You can live like a Christian here and enjoy all the refinements and decencies of life for a reasonable consideration. How my heart leaped when I saw the old, gray, sooty walls looming up through the river haze! I thought it best to sneak in by the back way, because if I go up the front stairs and ring the bell there

may be loiterers around who've seen Laura the Lady before, and might become impertinently curious about her future movements. And then when I saw Tom waiting for me—my own Tom, that I lawfully married in a burst of affection three years ago at Leamington—I shouted out greetings, and danced on the deck, and waved my handkerchief. It was worth while having lived in Chicago for a year to come back to London and Tom and a little furnished flat in Knightsbridge.

We were very respectable and quiet for a month, just a few callers climbing up the front stairs, and demure, female tea parties at intervals. I bought plants to put in the windows, and did knitting in a conspicuous solitude which the neighbors could overlook. When I saw the maiden lady opposite scrutinizing me through an opera glass I felt like sending her my marriage certificate to run her eye over and return. We even hired a maid of all work from an agency, as a touch of local color on this worthy domestic picture. But when the Castlecourt diamond scheme began to ripen, I nagged at her till she was impudent, and bundled her off. Maud Durlan came in then, put on a cap and apron, and played her part a good deal better than she used to when she acted soubrettes in the vaudeville.

We were two weeks lying low, maturing our plans, though when I left Chicago I knew what I was coming back for. Outwardly all was the same as usual—the decent callers still climbed the front stairs, and elderly ladies who, without any stretch of imagination, might have been my mother and aunts, dropped in for tea. I used to wonder how the people on the floor below—they were the family of a man who made rubber tires for bicycles—would have felt if they could have seen Maud, our neat and respectable slavey, sitting with the French heels of her slippers caught on the third shelf of the bookcase, dropping cigarette ashes into the wastepaper basket.

When all was ready Tom and I left for a "business trip" on the Continent.

We went away in a four-wheeler—driven by Handsome Harry—the top piled with luggage, my face at the window smiling a last, cautioning good-by at Maud. Five days later, under the name of Sara Dwight, I was installed as housemaid on the third floor of Burridge's Hotel.

I had done work of that kind before, once in New York and at another time in Paris; having been born and spent my childhood in that cheerful city, my French is irrefragable. The famous robbery of the Comtesse de Chateaugay's rubies was my work—but I mustn't brag about past exploits. I had never been engaged in a hotel theft of the importance of the Castlecourt one. The necklace was valued at between eight thousand and nine thousand pounds. The stones were not so remarkable for size as for quality. They were of an unusually even excellence and pure water.

After I had been in the hotel for a few days and watched the Castlecourt party, all apprehension left me, and I felt confident and cool. They were an extremely simple layout. Lady Castlecourt was a beauty, a seductive, smiling, white and gold person, without any sense at all. Her husband adored her. Being a man of some brains, that was what might have been expected. What might not have been expected was that she appeared to reciprocate his affection. Having made a careful study of the manners and customs of the upper classes, I was not prepared for this. I note it as one of those exceptions to rule which occur now and then in the animal kingdom.

Besides the marquis and his lady, there were a maid and a valet to be considered. The former was a dense, honest woman named Sophy Jeffers, close on to forty and of the unredeemed ugliness of the normal lady's maid. Such being the case, it was but natural to find that she was in love with Chawlmers, the valet, who was twenty-seven and good-looking. Jeffers was too truthful to tamper with her own age, but she did not feel it necessary to keep up the same rigid standard when it

came to Chawlmers. It was less of a lie to make him ten years older than herself ten years younger. From these facts I drew my deductions as to the sort of adversary Jeffers might be, and I found that by a modest avoidance of Chawlmers' society I could make her my lifelong friend.

The evening of the Duke of Duxbury's dinner was the time I decided upon as the most convenient for taking the stones. I had heard from Jeffers that the marquis and marchioness were going. When her ladyship left her rooms that afternoon I heard her tell Jeffers that she would not be back till after six, and to have everything ready at that hour. Off and on, for the next two hours, I was doing work about the corridor with a duster. It was near six when I heard the two servants talking in the sitting room. A bird's-eye view through the keyhole showed me where they were, and that they were engaged in searching for something in the desk. It was my chance. With my housemaid's pass-key, I opened the door a crack and peeped in. The leather case of the diamonds stood on the dressing table not twenty feet from the door. It did not take five minutes to enter, open the case, take the necklace and leave. Jeffers heard me. She was in the room almost as I closed the door. Before she could have got into the hall I was in the broom closet, hunting for a dust pan. But she evidently suspected nothing, for the door did not open, and there was no indication of disturbance.

Two days later Tom and I returned from our "business trip" to the Continent. I quite prided myself on the way our luggage was labeled. It had just the right, knock-about, piebald look. We drove up in a four-wheeler. Handsome Harry on the box, and Maud opened the door for us. For the next few days we were quiet and kept indoors. We spent the time peacefully in the kitchen, breaking the setting of the diamonds and reading about the robbery in the papers. As soon as things simmered down Tom was to take the stones across to Holland, where

they would be distributed. We threw away the settings and put the diamonds in a small bag of chamois skin that I pinned to my corset with a safety pin.

That was the way things were—untroubled as a summer sea—till ten days after our return, when I began to get restive. I had had what they call in America "a strenuous time" at Burridge's, working like a slave all day, with not a soul to speak to but a parcel of ignorant servant women, and I wanted livening up. I longed for the light and noise of Piccadilly, the crowds and the restaurants, but what I wanted particularly was to go to the theater and see a play called "The Forgiven Prodigal."

Maud and Tom raised a clamor of disapproval—what was the use of running risks, did I think because I'd been in Chicago for nearly a year that I was forgotten, did I think the men in Scotland Yard who knew me were all dead, did I think the excitement of the Castle-court robbery was over and done? I yawned at them, and then told them, with a gentle smile, that they were a "pusillanimous pair." There might be many men in Scotland Yard who knew me, and that, as they say in Chicago, "is all the good it would do them." They couldn't arrest me for sitting peacefully at a theater looking at a play. As for connecting me with Sara Dwight, I would give anyone a hundred pounds who, when I was dressed and had my war paint on, would find in me a single suggestion of the late housemaid at Burridge's. So I talked them down, and if I didn't convince them of the reasonableness of my arguments, I at least managed to soothe their fears.

I dressed myself with especial care, and when the last rite of my toilet was accomplished looked critically in the glass to see if anything of Sara Dwight remained. The survey contented me. Sara's mother, if there had been such a person, would have denied me. I was all in black, a sweeping, spangly dress I had bought in New York, cut low, and my neck is not my weak point,

especially when *crème des violettes* has been rubbed over it. My hair was waved—Maud does it very well, much better than she cooks, I regret to say—and dressed high, with a small red wreath of geraniums round it. Nose powdered to a probable, ladylike whiteness, a touch of rouge, a tiny *mouche* near the corner of one eye, and long black gloves—and, presto change! I wore no jewels—their owners might recognize them. One could hardly say I “wore” the Castlecourt diamonds, which were fastened to my corset with a safety pin. They were rather uncomfortable, but they were the only thing about me that was.

As I stood in front of the glass, putting on finishing touches, Maud left the room and went to the drawing room to watch for Handsome Harry, who was to drive our hansom. I did not like taking a hired driver, and thank goodness I didn't! I was putting a last *souçon* of scarlet on my lips when she came back, stepping softly and with her eyes round and uneasy looking.

“I don't know whether I'm nervous,” she says, “but there's a man just gone by in a hansom, and he leaned out and looked hard at our windows.”

“I hope it amused him,” I said, looking critically at my lips to see if they were not a little too incredibly ruddy. “It's a harmless and innocent way of passing the time, so we mustn't be hard on him if it doesn't happen to be very intellectual. Come, help me on with my cloak, and don't stand there like Patience on a monument staring at thieves.”

I was irritated with Maud trying to upset my peace of mind that way. She'd had any amount of good times while I'd been at Burrage's with my nose to the grindstone. And here she was, the first time I'd got a chance to have a spree, looking like a depressed owl and talking like the warning voice of conscience. As she silently held up my cloak and I thrust my hand in the sleeve, I said, over my shoulder:

“And you needn't go upsetting Tom by telling him about strange men in hansoms who stare up at our front

windows. I want to have a good time this evening, not feel that I'm sitting by a guilty being who jumps every time he's spoken to, as if the curse of Cain was on him.”

Maud said nothing, and I shook myself into my cloak and swept out to the hall, where Tom was waiting.

There had been a slight fog all afternoon, and now it was thick; not a “pea-soup” one, but a good, damp, obscuring fog; a regular “burglar's delight.” As we came down the steps we saw the two hansom lamps making blurs, like lights behind white cotton screens. Tom was grumbling about it and about going out generally, as he helped me in. And just at that minute, still and quick, like a picture going across a magic-lantern slide, I saw a man on the other side of the street step out of the shadow of a porch, and glide swiftly and softly past the light of the lamp and up the street to where the form of a waiting hansom loomed. It was all very simple and natural, but his walk was odd—so noiseless and stealthy.

I got in and Tom followed me. He hadn't seen anything. For the moment I didn't speak of it, because I wasn't sure. But I've got to admit that my heart beat against the Castlecourt diamonds harder than was comfortable. We started, and I listened and faintly, some way behind us, I heard the *ker-lump! ker-lump! ker-lump!* of another horse's hoofs on the asphalt. I leaned forward over the door and tried to look back. Through the mist I saw the two yellow eyes of the hansom behind us. Tom asked me what was the matter, and I told him. He whistled—a long, single note—then leaned back very steady and still. We didn't say anything for a bit, but just sat tight and listened.

It kept behind us that way for about ten minutes. Then I pushed up the trap and said to Harry:

“What's this hansom behind us up to, Harry?”

“That's what I want to know,” he says, quiet and low.

“Lose it if you can without being too

much of a Jehu," I answered, and shut the trap.

He tried to lose it, and we began a chase, slow at first, and then faster and faster, down one street and up the other. The fog by this time was as thick and white as wool, and we seemed to break through it like a ship, as if we were going through something dense and hard to penetrate. It seemed to me, too, a maddeningly quiet night. There was no traffic, no noise of wheels to get mixed with ours. The *ker-lump, ker-lump* of our horse's hoofs came back as clear as sounds in a calm at sea from the long lines of house fronts. And that devilish hansom never lost us. It kept just the same distance behind us. We could hear its horse's hoofs like an echo of our own beating through the fog. It got no nearer; it went no faster. It did not seem in a hurry; it never deviated from our track. There was something hideously unagitated and cool about it, a sort of deadly, sinister persistence. I saw it in imagination like a live monster with bulging yellow eyes, staring with gloating greediness at us as we ran feebly along before it.

Tom didn't say much. He doesn't in moments like this. He's got the nerve all right, but not the brain. There's no inventive ability in Tom, he's not built for crises. Handsome Harry now and then dropped some remark through the trap, which was like a trickle of icy water down one's spine. I began to realize that my lips were dry and that the insides of my gloves were damp. I knew that whatever was to be done had to come from me. I'd got them into this, and, as they say in Chicago, "it was up to me" to get them out.

I leaned over the doors and looked at the street we were going through. I know that part of London like a book—the insides of some of the houses as well as the outsides. It's a part of our business, in which I'm supposed to be quite an expert. The street was a small one, near Walworth Crescent, the houses not the smartest in the locality, but good, solid, reliable buildings inhabited by good, solid, reliable people. The lower floors were all alight. It was

the heart of the season, and in many of them there were dinners afoot. I thought, with a flash of longing—such as a drowning man might feel if he thought of suddenly finding himself on terra firma—of serene, smiling people sitting down to soup. I'd have given the Castlecourt diamonds at that moment to have been sitting down with them to cold soup, sour soup, greasy soup, any kind of soup—only to be sitting down to soup!

We turned a corner sharp, going now at a tearing pace, and I saw before us a length of street wrapped in fog and blurred at regular intervals by the lights of lamps. It looked ghostlike, so white, so noiseless, lined on either side by dim house fronts blotted with an indistinct sputter of lights. There was not a sound but our own horse's hoofbeats and, far off, like a noise muffled by cotton wool, the echo of our pursuers. Through the opaque, motionless atmosphere I saw that the vista into which I stared was deserted. There was not a human figure or a vehicle in sight. It was a lull, a brief respite, a moment of incalculable value to us!

My mind was as clear as crystal, and I felt a sense of cool, high exhilaration. I have only felt this way in desperate moments, and this was a truly desperate moment—a pursuer on our heels and the diamonds in my possession.

I leaned over the doors and looked up the line of houses. It was Farley Street; who lived in Farley Street? Suddenly I remembered that I knew all about the people who lived in No. 15. They were Americans named Kennedy, a man, his wife and a little girl. He was manager of the London branch of a Chicago concern called the Colonial Box, Tub and Cordage Company that I had often heard of in America. We had marked the house, and made extensive investigations before I left, intending to add it to our list, as Mrs. Kennedy had some handsome jewelry and silver. Since my return I had seen her name in the papers at various entertainments, and Maud had told me a lot about her social successes. She was pretty, and people were taking her up.

All this—that it takes me some minutes to tell—flashed through my mind in a revolution of the wheels.

I could see now that the windows of No. 15 were lit up. The Kennedys were evidently at home, perhaps had a dinner on. They, along with the rest of the world, would in a minute be sitting down to soup. They might be sitting down now; it was close on to half-past eight. Why could not we sit down with them?

"I lifted the top and said to Harry:

"Is the hansom round the corner yet?"

"No," he answered. "It's our only chance. They're still a bit behind us. I can tell by the sound."

"Drive to No. 15, second from the corner," I said. "And go as if the devil was after you."

I dropped the trap, and as we tore down to No. 15 I spoke in a series of broken sentences to Tom:

"We're going in here to dinner. You must look as if it was all right. If we carry it off well they won't dare to question. We're Major and Mrs. Thatcher, of the Lancers, that arrived Saturday from India. They're Americans, and won't know anything, so you can say about what you like. Give them India hot from the pan. I've been living in London while you've been away. That's how I come to know them and you don't. My Christian name's Ethel. Do the dull, heavy, haw-haw style. Americans expect it."

We brought up at the curb with a jerk, threw back the doors and dashed up the steps. I caught a vanishing glimpse of Handsome Harry leaning far forward to lash the horse as the hansom went bounding off into the fog. As we stood pressed against the door Tom whispered:

"What the devil is their name?"

"Kennedy," I hissed back at him, "Cassius P. Kennedy. Came originally from Necropolis City, Ohio, lived in Chicago as a clerk in the Colonial Box, Tub and Cordage Company, and then was made manager of the London branch. Their weak point is society. If any people are there, keep your

mouth shut. Be dense and unresponsive."

We heard the rattle of the pursuing hansom at the end of the street, then through the ground glass of the door saw a manservant's approaching figure.

"Only stay a few minutes over the coffee. We're going on to the opera," I whispered, as the door opened.

I swept in, Tom on my heels. We came as fast as we could without actually falling in and dashing the servant aside, for the noise of our pursuer was loud in our ears, and we knew we were lost if we were seen entering. As Tom somewhat hastily shut the door I was conscious of the expression of surprise on the face of the solemn butler. He did not say anything, but looked it. I slid out of my cloak and handed it languidly to him.

"No, I won't go upstairs," I said, in answer to his glare of growing amaze.

Then I turned to the glass in the hatrack and began to arrange my hair. I could see reflected in it a pair of portières, half open, and affording a glimpse of a room bathed in the subdued, rosy light of lamps. I was conscious of movement there behind the portières—a stir of skirts, a sort of hush of curiosity. There had been the sound of voices when we came in. Now I noticed the stealthy, occasional sibilant of a whisper. There was no dinner party. We were going to dine *en famille*. So much the better. My hair neat, I turned to the butler and, touching the jet on my corsage with an arranging hand, murmured:

"Major and Mrs. Thatcher."

The man drew back the curtain, and, with our name going before us in loud announcement, I rustled into the room, Tom behind me.

Standing beside an empty fireplace and facing the entrance in attitudes of expectancy were a young man and woman. In the soft pink lamplight I had an impression of their two astonished faces, or rather astonished eyes, for they were making a spirited struggle to obliterate all surprise from their faces. The woman was succeeding the

best. She did it quite well. When she saw me she smiled almost naturally and came forward with a fair imitation of a hostess' welcoming manner. She was young and very pretty, a fine-featured, delicate woman, in a floating lace tea gown. Her hand was thin and small, a real American hand, and gleamed with rings. I could see her husband out of the tail of my eye, battling with his amazement and staring at Tom. Tom was behind me, looming up bulkily, not saying anything, but looking blankly through the glass wedged in his eye, and pulling his mustache.

"My dear Mrs. Kennedy," I said, in my sweetest and most languid drawl, "are we late? I hope not. There is such a fog, really I thought we'd never get here."

My fingers touched her hand and my eyes looked into hers. She was immensely curious and upset, but she smiled boldly and almost easily. I could see her inward wrappings to place me and to wonder if she could possibly have asked us and had forgotten that, too.

"And at last," I continued, glibly, "I am able to present my husband. I was afraid you were beginning to think he was a sort of *Mrs. Harris*. Harry dear, Mrs. Kennedy and Mr. Kennedy."

They all bowed. Tom held out his big paw and took her little hand for a moment and then dropped it. He had just the stolid, awkward, owlish look of a certain kind of army man.

"Awfully glad to get here, I'm sure," he boomed out. And then he said, "What?" and looked at Mr. Kennedy.

Mr. Kennedy was not as much master of the situation as his wife. He wasn't exactly frightened, but he was inwardly distracted with not knowing what to do.

"Pleased to meet you," he said, loudly, to Tom, quite forgetting his English accent. "Glad you could get around here. Foggy night, all right!"

I looked at the clock. Tom stood solemnly on the hearth rug, staring at the fire. The Kennedys for a moment

could think of nothing to say, and I had to look at the clock again, screw up my eyes, and remark:

"Just half-past. We're not really late at all. You know Harry is *such* a punctual person, and he's afraid I've got into unpunctual habits while he's been away."

"He *has* been away for some time, hasn't he?" said Mrs. Kennedy, looking from one to the other with piquant eyes that yearned for information.

"Four years with the Lancers in India," Tom boomed out again.

The Kennedys were relieved. They'd got hold of something. They both sat down, and it was obvious that they gathered themselves together for new efforts.

I did likewise. I realized that I must be biographical to a reasonable extent; just enough to satisfy curiosity, without giving the impression that I was sitting down to tell my life story the way the heroine does in the first act of a play.

"He arrived only last Saturday," I said. "And you may imagine how pleased I was to be able to bring him to-night in answer to your kind invitation."

"Only too glad he could come," murmured Mrs. Kennedy, oblivious of the terrified side glance that her husband cast in her direction. "Very fortunate that you had this one evening disengaged."

"I'm taking him about everywhere," I continued, with girlish loquacity. "People had begun to think that Major Thatcher was a myth, and I'm showing them that there's a good deal of him, and he's very much alive. For four years, you know, I've been living here, first in those miserable lodgings in Half Moon Street, and after that in my flat—you know it—on Gower Street. A nice little place enough, but much nicer now with Harry in it."

"Of course," said Mrs. Kennedy, as sympathetically as was compatible with her eagerness to pounce upon such crumbs of information as I let drop. "How dull these four years have been for you!"

"Dull!" I echoed. "Dull is not the word," and I gave my eyes an expressive acrobatic roll toward the ceiling.

"She couldn't have stood it out there," said Tom, in an unexpected bass growl. "Too hot! Ethel can't stand the heat—never could."

Then he lapsed into silence, staring at the fire under Mr. Kennedy's fascinated gaze. Dinner was just then announced, and I heard him saying as he walked in behind us:

"Is India very hot, Mrs. Kennedy? Once in Delhi I sat for four days in a cold bath and read the Waverley novels."

To which Mrs. Kennedy answered, brightly:

"I should think that would have put you to sleep and you might have been drowned."

That was one of the most remarkable dinners I ever sat through. Of the two couples the Kennedys were least at ease. They were more afraid of being found out than we were. The cold sweat would break out on Mr. Kennedy's brow when the conversation edged up toward the subject of previous meetings, and Mrs. Kennedy would begin to talk feverishly about other things. She was the kind of woman who hates to be unequal to any social emergency, and I am bound to confess, considering how unprepared she was, she held her own this time with tact and spirit. She had the copious flow of small talk so many Americans seem to have at command, and it rippled fluently and untiringly on from the soup to the savory. I added to the impression I had already made by alluding to various titled friends of mine, letting their names drop carelessly from my lips as the pearls and diamonds fell from the mouth of the virtuous princess.

Tom did well, too—excellently well. When the conversation showed signs of languishing he began about India. He gave us some strange pieces of information about that distant land that I think he invented on the spur of the moment, and he told several anecdotes which were quite deadly and without

point. When they were concluded he gave a short, deep laugh, let his eyeglass fall out, looked at us one after the other, and said, "What?"

I would have enjoyed myself immensely if a sense of heavy uneasiness had not continued to weigh on me. What troubled me was the uncertainty of not knowing whether we really had escaped our pursuers. There was the horrible possibility that they had seen us enter the house, and were waiting to grab us as we came out. If they were there and I was caught with the diamonds in my possession it would be a pretty dark outlook for Laura the Lady—so dark I could not bear to picture it even in thought. As I talked and laughed with my hosts my mind was turning over every possible means by which I could get rid of the stones before I left the house, trying to think up some way in which I could dispose of them and yet which would not place them quite beyond reclaiming. I think my nerves had been shaken by that spectral pursuit in the fog. Anyway, I wasn't willing to risk a second edition of it.

We sat over dinner a little more than an hour. It was not yet ten when Mrs. Kennedy and I rose, and, with a reminder to Tom that we were to "go on to the opera," I trailed off in advance of my hostess across the hall into the drawing room. Here we sat down by a little gilt table and disposed ourselves to endure that dreary period when women have to put up with one another's society for ten minutes. It was my opportunity of getting rid of the diamonds, and I knew it.

We had sipped our coffee for a few minutes and dodged about with the usual commonplaces, when I suddenly grew grave and, leaning toward Mrs. Kennedy, said:

"Now that we are alone, my dear Mrs. Kennedy, I must ask you about a matter of which I am particularly anxious to hear more."

She looked at me with furtive alarm. I could see she was nerving herself for a grapple with the unknown.

"What matter?" she said.

I lowered my voice to the key of confidences that are dire, if not actually tragic.

"How about poor Amelia?" I murmured.

She dropped her eyes to her cup, frowning a little. I was thrilling with excitement, waiting to hear what she was going to say. After a moment she lifted her face, perfectly calm and grave, to mine, and said:

"Really, the subject is a very painful one to me. I'd rather not talk about it."

It was a master stroke. I could not have done better myself. I eyed her with open admiration. You never would have thought it of her; she seemed so young. After she had spoken she gave a sigh and again looked down at her cup, with an expression on her face of pensive musing. At that moment the voices of the men leaving the dining room struck on my ear.

I put my hand into the front of my dress and undid the safety pin. My manner became furtive and hurried.

"Mrs. Kennedy," I said, leaning across the table and speaking almost in a whisper, "I entirely sympathize with your feelings, but I am *very much* worried about Amelia. You know the—the—circumstances?" She raised her eyes, looked into mine and nodded darkly. "Well, I have something here for her. It's nothing much," I said, in answer to a look of protest I saw rising in her face; "just the merest trifle I would like you to give her. *She* will understand."

I drew out the bag, and I saw her looking at it with curious, uneasy eyes. The men were approaching through the back drawing room. I rose to my feet, and, still with the secret, hurried air, I said:

"Don't give yourself any trouble about it. It's just from me to her. Our husbands, of course, mustn't know. I'll put it here. Poor Amelia!"

There was a crystal and silver bowl on the table, and I put the bag into it and placed a book over it.

"Mrs. Thatcher," she said, quickly, "really, I——"

"Hush!" I said, dramatically. "It's for Amelia. *We* understand."

And then the men entered the room.

We left a few minutes later. The butler called a cab for us, and even if a person had never been a thief he ought to have had some idea of how we felt as we issued out of that house and walked down the steps. We neither of us spoke till we got inside the hansom and drove off—safe for that time, anyway.

We went to Handsome Harry's place for that night, and sent him back for Maud, with the message she must get out immediately with what things she could bring. By eleven she was with us with her trunk and mine on top of a four-wheeler. The next morning we had scattered, I for Calais, en route for Paris; Tom for Edinburgh; Maud went to join a vaudeville company that she acts with betweenwhiles. We had to leave a good many things in the flat, but I felt we'd got out cheaply, and had no regrets.

That is the history of my connection with the Castlecourt diamond robbery. Of course it was not the end of the connection of our gang with the case, but my actual participation ended here. I was simply an interested spectator from this on. My statement is merely the record of my own personal share in the theft, and as such is written with as much clearness and fullness as I, who am unused to the pen, have got at my command.

(Statement of Cassius P. Kennedy, formerly of Neopolis City, Ohio, now manager of the London branch of the Colonial Box, Tub and Cordage Company, Ltd., of Chicago and St. Louis.)

We had been in London two years when a series of extraordinary events took place which involved us—through no fault of our own—in the most unpleasant predicament that ever overtook two honest, respectable Americans in a foreign country.

I had been sent over to start the English branch of the Colonial Box, Tub and Cordage Company, one of the big-

gest concerns of the middle West, and it wasn't two months before I realized that the venture was going to catch on and I was going to be at the head of a booming business. I'd brought my wife and little girl along with me. We'd been married five years, met in Necropolis City and lived there and afterward in Chicago, where I got my first big promotion. She was Daisy K. Fairweather, of Buncumville, Indiana, and had been the belle of the place. She'd also attracted considerable attention in St. Louis and Kansas City, where she'd visited round a good deal. There was nothing green about Daisy K. Fairweather—never had been.

Daisy and I didn't know many people when we first came over, but that little woman wasn't here six months before she'd sized up the situation and made up her mind just how and where she was going to butt in. The first thing she did was to conform to those particular ones among the local customs that seemed to her the most high-toned. In Chicago we'd always dined at half-past six and given the hired girls every Thursday off. In London we dined the first year at half-past seven and the second at half-past eight. We had four servants and a butler, called Perkins, who ran everything in sight, myself included. I always dressed for dinner after Perkins came, and tried to look as if it was my lifelong custom. I'd have sunk out of sight in a sea of shame rather than have had Perkins think I had not been brought up to it.

Daisy caught on to everything and then passed the word on to me. She was always springing innovations on me, and I did the best I could to keep my end up. She stopped talking the way she used to in Necropolis City, and made Elaine—that's our little girl—quit calling me "Popper" and call me "Daddy." She called her front hair her "fringe" and her shirt-waist her "bloos," and she made me careful of what I said before the servants. "Servants talk so!" she'd say, just as if she'd heard them. In Necropolis City or even Chicago we never bothered

about the "help" talking. They said what they wanted, and we said what we wanted, and that was all there was to it. But I supposed it was all right. Whatever Daisy K. Fairweather Kennedy says goes with me.

By the second season Daisy'd broken quite a way into society and knew a bishop and two lords. We were asked out a good deal, and we'd some worthy little dinners at our own shack—15 Farley Street, near Walworth Crescent, a thirty-five foot, four-story, high-stooped edifice that we paid the same rent for you'd pay for a seven-room flat in Chicago. Daisy by this time was in with all kinds of push. She was what she called a "success." Nights when we didn't go out she'd sit with me and say:

"Well, I don't really see how I'll ever be able to live in Chicago again, and Necropolis City would certainly kill me."

This same season Lady Sara Gyves dined with us twice—it was a great step, Daisy said, and I took it for granted she knew—and once at a reception Daisy stood right up close to the Marchioness of Castlecourt, the greatest beauty in London, and watched her drink a cup of tea. Daisy didn't meet her that time, but she said to me: "Next season I'll know her, and the season after that, if we're careful, I'll dine with her. Then, Cassius P. Kennedy, we will have arrived!"

I said: "Sure!" That's what I mostly say to her, because she's mostly right. You don't often find that little woman making breaks.

It was in our third season in London, the time the middle of May, when the things occurred of which I have made mention at the beginning of this statement. It was this way:

We'd been going out a good deal, pretty nearly every night, and we were glad to have for once a quiet evening at home. Of course that doesn't mean the same as it does in Necropolis City or even Chicago. We dine just the same at half-past eight, and both of us dress for dinner. We have to, Daisy says, no matter how we feel, because

of the servants. The servants in London are good servants, all right, but the way you have to avoid shocking their sensitive feelings sometimes makes a freeborn American rebellious. I like to think I'm an object of interest to my fellow creatures, but it's a good deal of a bother to have it on your mind that you mustn't destroy the illusions of the butler or upset the ideals of the cook.

As we were waiting for dinner to be announced we heard a cab rattle up and stop, as it seemed, at our door. We looked at each other with inquiring eyes, and then heard the cab go off, on the full jump, I should say, by the noise it made, and a minute later the bell rang sharp and quick. Perkins opened the door, and Daisy and I heard a lady's voice, very sweet and sort of drawing, say something in the vestibule. I peeped through the curtains, and there were a man and a woman—a distinguished-looking pair—taking off their coats and primping themselves up at the hall mirror. I'd never seen either of them before, as far as I could remember, but I could tell by their general make-up that they were the real thing; the kind Daisy was always cultivating and asking to dinner.

I stepped back and said to her in a whisper:

"Somebody come to dinner, and you've forgotten all about it."

She shook her head, and whispered back:

"I haven't asked anyone to dinner. I'm sure I haven't."

"Well, they're here, whether we've asked 'em or not," I hissed. "And you can't turn 'em out. They expect to be fed."

"Who are they?"

"Search me! Friends of yours I've never seen."

"For pity's sake, don't look surprised! Try and pretend it's all right."

We lined up by the fireplace and got our smiles all ready. The portière was drawn and Perkins announced:

"Major and Mrs. Thatcher."

They sailed smilingly into the room, the woman ahead, rustling in a long,

sparkly, black dress. To my certain knowledge, I'd never seen either of them before. The woman was very pretty, not pretty in the sense that Daisy is, with beautiful features and a perfect complexion, but slim and pale and aristocratic looking. She had black hair with a little wreath of red flowers in it, and the whitest neck I ever saw. She evidently thought she was all right as far as herself and the house and the dinner were concerned, for she was perfectly serene and easy as an old shoe. The man behind her was a big, handsome, dense chap, just home from India, they said, and he looked it. He'd that dull way those dead swell army fellows sometimes have; it goes with a long mustache and an eyeglass.

I looked out of the tail of my eye at Daisy, and I knew by her face she couldn't remember either of them. But they were the genuine article, and she wasn't going to be feazed by any situation that could boil up out of the society pool. She was just as easy as they were. She'd a smile on her face like a child, and she said the little, mild, milky things women say, just as milkily and mildly as though she was greeting her lifelong friends.

Well, it went along as smoothly as a summer sea. They located themselves as Major and Mrs. Thatcher, and told a lot about their life and their movements, all of which I could see Daisy greedily gathering in. I didn't know whether she remembered them or not, but I didn't think she did, she was so careful about alluding to places where she had met them. They seemed to know her all right; Mrs. Thatcher especially. She'd allude to smart houses where Daisy had been asked, and tony people that were getting to be friends of Daisy's. She seemed to be right in the best circles herself. I wouldn't like to say how many times she mentioned the names of earls and lords; one of them, Baron—some name like Fiddlesticks—she said was her cousin.

She didn't stay long after dinner. I don't think I sat ten minutes with the major, and it was a dull ten minutes, and no mistake. There was nothing

light and airy about him. He asked me about Chicago—which he pronounced “Chickago”—and said he had heard there was good sport in the Rocky Mountains, and thought of going there to hunt the Great Auk. I didn’t know what the Great Auk was, and I asked him. He looked blankly at me and said he believed a “large form of bird,” which surprised me, as I had an idea it was a preadamite beast, like a behemoth.

I was glad to have the major go, not only because he was so dull, but because I was so dying to find out from Daisy if she’d placed them, and who they were. They were hardly on the steps and the front door shut on them before I was back in the parlor.

“Who are they, for Heaven’s sake?” I burst out.

She shook her head, laughing a little and looking utterly bewildered.

“My dear boy,” she said, “I haven’t the least idea. It’s the most extraordinary thing I ever knew.”

“Isn’t there anything about them you remember? Didn’t they say something that gave you a clue?”

“Not a word, and yet they seem to know me so well. The queerest thing of all was that, when you were in the dining room with the man, the woman, in the most confidential tone, began to ask me about some one called Amelia. It was *too* dreadful! I hadn’t the faintest notion what she meant.”

“What did you say? I’ll lay ten to one you were equal to it.”

“I realized it was desperate, and, after going through the dinner so creditably, I wasn’t going to break down over the coffee. She said, ‘How about poor Amelia?’ I knew by that ‘poor,’ and by the expression of her face, it was something unusual and queer. I thought a minute, and then looked as solemn as I could and answered, ‘Really, the subject is a very painful one to me. I’d rather not talk about it.’”

We both roared. It was so like Daisy to be ready that way!

“And then—this is the strangest part of all—she put her hand in the front of her dress and drew out some little

thing of chamois leather, and told me to give it to Amelia from her. I tried to stop her, but it was too late. She put it here in the crystal bowl.”

Daisy went to the bowl and took out a little limp sack of chamois leather.

“It feels like pebbles,” she said, pinching it.

And then she opened it and shook the “pebbles” into her hand. I bent down to look at them, my head close to hers. The palm of her hand was covered with small, sparkling crystals of different sizes and very bright. We looked at them, and then at one another. They were diamonds!

For a moment we didn’t either of us say anything. Daisy had been laughing, and her laugh died away into a sort of scared giggle. Her hand began to shake a little, and it made the diamonds send out gleams in all directions.

“What—what—does it mean?” she said, in a low sort of gasp.

I just looked at them and shook my head. But I felt a cold sinking in that part of my organism where my courage is usually screwed to the sticking place.

“Are they real, do you think?” she said again, and she took the evening paper and poured them out on it.

Spread out that way, they looked most awfully numerous and rich. There must have been more than a hundred of them, of different sizes, and shaking around on the surface of the paper made them shine and sparkle like stars.

“It’s a fortune, Cassius,” she said, almost in a whisper. “It’s a fortune in diamonds. Why did she leave them?”

“Didn’t she say they were for Amelia?” I said, in a hollow tone.

“Yes, but who is Amelia? How will we ever find her? What shall we do? It’s too awful!”

We stood opposite one another, with the paper between us, and tried to think. In the lamplight the diamonds winked at us with what seemed human malice. I turned round and picked up the bag they had come from, looked vaguely into it and shook it. A last stone fell

out on the paper, quite a large one, and added itself to the pile.

"Why did she leave them here?" Daisy moaned. "What did she bother us for? Why didn't she take them to Amelia herself?"

"Because she was afraid," I said, in the undertone of melodrama. "They're stolen, Daisy."

I had voiced the fear in both our hearts. We sat down opposite one another, on either side of the table, with the newspaper full of diamonds between us. I don't know whether I was as pale as Daisy, but I felt quite as bad as she looked. And sitting thus, each staring into the other's scared face, we ran over the events of the evening.

We couldn't make much of it, it was too uncanny. But from the first we both decided we'd felt something to be wrong. Why or how they'd come, who they were, what they wanted—we couldn't answer a single question. We were in a maze. The only thing that seemed certain was that they had one hundred and fifty diamonds of varying sizes that they had wanted, for some reason, to get rid of, and they'd got rid of them to us. And so we talked and talked, till by slow degrees we got to the point where suddenly, with a simultaneous start, we looked at one another and breathed out:

"The Castlecourt diamonds!"

We had read it all in the papers, and we had talked it over, and here we were with a pile of gems in a newspaper that might be the very stones.

"And next year I'd hoped to know Lady Castlecourt! I'd been sure I would," Daisy wailed. "And now——"

"But you haven't stolen the diamonds, dearest," I said, soothingly. "You needn't get in a fever about that."

"But, good heavens, I might just as well! Do you suppose there's anyone in the world fool enough to believe the story of what happened here tonight? People say it's hard to believe everything in the Bible! Why, Jonah and the whale is a simple, everyday affair compared to it."

It did look bad; the more we talked of it the worse it looked. We didn't sleep all night, and when the dawn was coming through the blinds we were still talking, trying to decide what to do. At breakfast we sat like two graven images, not eating a thing, and all that day in the office I found it impossible to concentrate my mind, but sat thinking of what on earth we'd do with those darned diamonds.

I'd suggested, the first thing, to go and give them up at the nearest police station. But Daisy wouldn't hear of that. She said that no one would believe a word of our story—it was too impossible. And when I came to think of it, I must say I agreed with her. I saw myself telling that story in a court of justice, and I realized that a look of conscious guilt would be painted on my face the whole time. I'd have felt, whether it was true or not, that nobody really ought to believe it, and as an honest, self-respecting citizen, I ought not to expect them to. Here we were, strangers that nobody knew a thing about, anyway! Daisy said they'd take us for accomplices, and when I said to her we'd be a pretty rank pair of accomplices to give up the swag without a struggle, she said they'd think we got scared and decided to do what she called "turn State's evidence."

She thought the best thing to do was to keep the stones till we could think up a more plausible story. We tried to do that, and the night after our meeting with Major and Mrs. Thatcher we stayed awake till three, thinking up "plausible stories." We got a great collection of them, but it seemed impossible to get a good one without implicating somebody. I invented a corker, but it cast a dark suspicion on Daisy; and she had an even better one, but it would have undoubtedly resulted in the arrest of Perkins and the housemaid, and possibly myself.

It was a horrible situation. Even if we could have escaped suspicion ourselves, it would have ruined us socially and financially. Would the Colonial Box, Tub and Cordage Company have retained as the head of its London

branch a man who had got himself mixed up with a sensational diamond robbery? Not on your life! That concern demands a high standard and unspotted record in all its employees. I'd have got the sack at the end of the month.

And Daisy! How would the bishop and two lords have felt about it? Had no more use for that little woman, you can bet your bottom dollar! Even Lady Sara Gyves, who they say will go anywhere to get a dinner, would have given her the Icehouse Laugh. I know them. And I saw my Daisy sitting at home all alone on her reception day, and taking dinner with me every night. No, sir! That wouldn't happen if Cassius P. Kennedy had to take those diamonds to the Thames and throw them off London Bridge in a weighted bag.

So there we were! It was a dreadful predicament. Every morning we read the papers with our hearts thumping like hammers. Every ring at the bell made us jump, and we had a deadly fear that each time the portière was lifted and a caller appeared we'd see the buttons and helmet of a policeman with a warrant of arrest concealed upon his person. I began to have awful dreams, and Daisy didn't sleep at all, and got pale and peaked. We thought up more "plausible stories," but they seemed to get less probable every time, and all our spare moments together—which used to be so happy and carefree—were now dark and harassed as the meetings of conspirators.

Even concealing the miserable things was a wearing anxiety. First we decided to divide them, Daisy to wear her half in the chamois bag hung around her neck, while I concealed mine in a money belt worn under my clothes. We had about decided on that, and I'd bought the belt, when we got the idea that if we were killed in an accident they'd be found on us, and then our memories would go down to posterity blackened with shame. So we just put them back in the bag and locked them up in Daisy's jewel case, round which we hovered as they say a

murderer does round the hiding place of his victim.

I never knew before how burglars felt, but if it was anything like the way Daisy and I did, I wonder anybody ever takes to that perilous trade. We were the most unhappy creatures in London, feeling ourselves a pair of thieves, and our unpolluted, innocent home no better than a "fence." There was less in the papers about the Castle-court diamond robbery, but that did not give us any peace, for, in the first place, we didn't know for certain that we had the Castlecourt diamonds; and, in the second, when we now and then *did* see dark allusions to the sleuths being "on a new and more promising scent," we modestly supposed that we might be the quarry to which it led. Daisy began to talk of "going to prison" as a termination of her career that might not be so far distant, and to the thought of which she was growing reconciled.

This about covers the ground of my immediate connection with the stolen diamonds. Their subsequent disposition is a matter in which my wife is more concerned than I am. She also will be able to tell her part of the story with more literary frills than I can muster up. I'm no writing man, and all I've tried to do is to state my part of the affair honestly and clearly.

(Statement of John Burns Gilsey, private detective, especially engaged on the Castlecourt Diamond Case.)

At a quarter before eight on the evening of May fourth a telephone message was sent to Scotland Yard that a diamond necklace, the property of the Marquis of Castlecourt, had been stolen from Burridge's Hotel. Brison, one of the best of their men, was detained upon the case, and three days later my services were engaged by the marquis. After investigations which have occupied several weeks I have become convinced that the case is an unusual and complicated one. The reasons which have led me to this conclusion I will now set down as briefly and clearly as possible.

As has already been stated in the

papers, the diamonds on the afternoon of the robbery were standing in a leather jewel case on the bureau in Lady Castlecourt's apartment. To this room access was obtained by three doors: that which led into Lord Castlecourt's room, that which led into the sitting room, and that which led into the hall.

Lord Castlecourt's valet, James Chawlmers, and Lady Castlecourt's maid, Sophy Jeffers, had been occupied in this suite of apartments throughout the afternoon. At six, Jeffers had laid out her ladyship's clothes, taken the diamonds from the metal dispatch box in which they were usually carried and set them on the bureau. She had then withdrawn into the sitting room with Chawlmers, where they had remained for half an hour talking. During this period of time Jeffers deposes that she heard the rustle of a skirt in the sitting room, and went to the door to see if anyone had entered. No one was to be seen. She returned to the sitting room and resumed her conversation with Chawlmers. It is the general supposition—and it would appear to be the reasonable one—that the diamonds were then taken. According to Jeffers, they were in the case at six o'clock, and on the testimony of Lord and Lady Castlecourt, they were gone at half-past seven. The person toward whom suspicion points is a housemaid, going by the name of Sara Dwight, who had a pass-key to the apartment.

The suspicions of Sara Dwight were strengthened by her actions. At a quarter past seven that evening she left the hotel without giving warning, and carrying no further baggage than a small portmanteau. Upon examination of her room, it was discovered that she had left a gown hanging on the pegs, and her box, which contained a few articles of coarse underclothing and a wadded cotton quilt. She had been uncommunicative with the other servants, but had had much conversation with Sophy Jeffers, who described her as a brisk, civil-spoken girl, whose manner of speech was above her station.

The natural suspicions evoked by her

behavior were intensified in the mind of Brison by the information that the celebrated crook, Laura the Lady, had returned to London. I myself had seen the woman at Earls court, and told Brison of the occurrence. It had appeared to Brison that Jeffers' description of the housemaid had many points of resemblance with Laura the Lady. The theft reminded us both of the affair of the Comtesse de Chateaugay's rubies, when this particular thief, who speaks French as well as she does English, was supposed to have been the moving spirit in one of the most daring jewel robberies of our time.

Brison, confident that Sara Dwight and Laura the Lady were one and the same, concentrated his powers in an effort to find her. He was successful to the extent of locating a woman closely resembling Laura the Lady, living quietly in a furnished flat in Knightsbridge with a man who passed as her husband. He discovered that this couple had left for a "business trip" on the Continent shortly before Sara Dwight's appearance at Burrigge's, and had returned shortly after her departure therefrom.

He regarded the pair and their movements as of sufficient importance to be watched, and for a week after their return from the Continent had the flat shadowed. One foggy night, while he himself was watching the place, the man and woman came out in evening dress, and took a hansom that was waiting for them. Brison followed them, and, the fog being dense and their horse fresh, lost them in the maze of streets about Walworth Crescent. He is positive that the occupants of the cab realized they were followed, and attempted to escape. He assures me that he saw the driver turn several times and look at his hansom and then lash his horse to a desperate speed.

One of the points in this nocturnal pursuit that he thinks most noteworthy is the manner in which the occupants of the cab disappeared. After keeping it well in sight for over half an hour, he lost it completely and suddenly in the short street that runs from Wal-

worth Crescent, north, into Farley Street; ten minutes later he is under the impression that he sighted it again near the Hyde Park Hotel. But if it was the same cab, it was empty, and the driver was looking for fares. For some hours after this Brison patrolled the streets in the neighborhood, but could find no trace of the suspected pair. It was midnight when he returned to his surveillance of the flat. The next morning he heard that its occupants had left. A search warrant revealed the fact that they had gone with such haste that they had left many articles of dress, etc., etc., behind them. There was every evidence of a hurried flight.

All this was so much clear proof, in Brison's opinion, of the guilt of Sara Dwight. Upon this hypothesis he is working, and I have not disturbed his confidence in the utility of his efforts. The result of my investigations, which I have been quietly and systematically pursuing for the last three weeks, has led me to a different and much more sensational conclusion. That Sara Dwight may have taken the diamonds I do not deny. But she was merely an accomplice in the hands of another. The real thief, in my opinion, is Gladys, Marchioness of Castlecourt.

My reasons for holding this theory are based upon observations taken at the time, upon my large and varied experience in such cases, and upon information that I have been collecting since the occurrence. Let me briefly state the result of my deductions and researches:

Lady Castlecourt, who was the daughter of a penniless Irish clergyman, was a young girl of great beauty brought up in the direst poverty. Her marriage with the Marquis of Castlecourt, which took place seven years ago this spring, lifted her into a position of social prominence and financial ease. Society made much of her; she became one of its most brilliant ornaments. Her husband's infatuation was well known. During the first years of their marriage he could refuse her nothing, and he stinted himself—for, though well off,

Lord Castlecourt is by no means a millionaire peer—in order to satisfy her whims. The lady very quickly developed great extravagances. She became known as one of the most expensively dressed women in London. It had been mentioned in certain society journals that Lord Castlecourt's revenues had been so reduced by his wife's extravagance that he had been forced to rent his town house in Grosvenor Gate, and for two seasons take rooms in Burridge's Hotel.

This is a simple statement of certain tendencies of the lady. Now let me state, with more detail, how these tendencies developed and to what they led.

I will admit here, before I go further, that my suspicions of Lady Castlecourt were aroused from the first. It was perhaps with predisposed mind that I began those explorations into her life during the past five years which have convinced me that she was the moving spirit in the theft of the diamonds.

For the first two years of her married life Lady Castlecourt lived most of the time on the estate of Castlecourt Marsh Manor. During this period she became the mother of two sons, and it was after the birth of the second that she went to London and spent her first season there since her marriage. She was in blooming health, and even more beautiful than she had been in her girlhood. She became the fashion—no gathering was complete without her; her costumes were described in the papers; royalty admired her.

I have discovered that at this time her husband gave her six hundred pounds per annum for a dressing allowance. During the first two years of her married life she lived within this. But after that she exceeded it to the extent of hundreds, and finally thousands, of pounds. The fifth year after her marriage she was in debt three thousand pounds, her creditors being dressmakers, furriers, jewelers and milliners in London and Paris. She made no attempt to pay these debts, and the tradesmen, knowing her high social position, and her husband's rigid sense of pecuniary obligations, did not press her,

and she went on spending with an unstinted hand.

It was last year that she finally precipitated the catastrophe by the purchase of a coat of Russian sable for the sum of one thousand pounds, and a set of turquoise ornaments valued at half that amount. Each of these purchases was made in Paris. The two creditors, having been already warned of her disinclination to meet her bills, had, it is said, laid wagers with other firms to which she was deeply in debt, that they would extract the money from her within the year.

It was in the summer of the past year that Lady Castlecourt was first threatened by Bolkonsky, the furrier, with law proceedings. In the end of September she went to Paris and visited the man in his own offices, and—I have it from an eyewitness—exhibited the greatest trepidation and alarm, finally begging, with tears, for an extension of a month's time. To this Bolkonsky consented, warning her that at the end of that time, if his account was not settled, he would acquaint his lordship with the situation and institute legal proceedings.

Before the month was up—that was in October of the past year—his account was paid in full by Lady Castlecourt herself. At the same time other accounts in Paris and London were entirely settled or compromised. I find that, during the months of October and November, Lady Castlecourt paid off debts amounting to nearly four thousand pounds. In most instances she settled them personally, paying them in bank notes. A few claims were paid by check. I have it from those with whom she transacted these monetary dealings, that she seemed greatly relieved to be able to discharge her obligations, and that in all cases she requested silence on the subject as the price of her future patronage.

I now come to a feature of the case that I admit greatly puzzles me. Lady Castlecourt was still wearing the diamonds when this large sum was disbursed by her. As far as can be ascertained, she had made no effort to sell

them, and I can find no trace of a frustrated attempt to steal them. She had suddenly become possessed of four thousand pounds without the aid of the diamonds. They were not called into requisition till nearly six months later.

The natural supposition would be that some one—an unknown donor—had put up the four thousand pounds; in fact, that Lady Castlecourt had a lover to whom, in a desperate extremity, she had appealed. But the most thorough examination of her past life reveals no hint of such a thing. Frivolous and extravagant as she undoubtedly was, she seems to have been, as far as her personal conduct goes, a moral and virtuous lady. Her name has been associated with no man's, either in a foolish flirtation or a scandalous and compromising intrigue. In fact, her devotion to Lord Castlecourt appears to have been of an absolutely genuine and sincere kind. While she did not scruple to deceive him as to her pecuniary dealings, she unquestionably seems to have been perfectly upright and honest in the matter of marital fidelity.

Where, then, did Lady Castlecourt secure this large sum of money? My reading of the situation is briefly this:

Her creditors becoming rebellious, and Lady Castlecourt becoming terrified, she appealed to some woman friend for a loan. Who this is I have no idea, but among her large circle of acquaintances there are several ladies of sufficient means and sufficiently intimate with Lady Castlecourt to have been able to advance the required sum. This was done, as I have shown above, in the month of October, when Lady Castlecourt was in Paris, where she at once began to pay-off her debts. After this she continued wearing the diamonds, and in my opinion—such is her shallowness and irresponsibility of character—forgot the obligations of the loan, which had probably been made under a promise of speedy repayment, either in full or in part.

It was then—this, let it be understood, is all surmise—that Lady Castlecourt's new and unknown debtor began to press for a repayment. There might

be many reasons why this should so closely have followed the loan. With a woman of Lady Castlecourt's lax and unbusiness-like methods, unusual conditions could be readily exacted. She is of the class of persons that, under a pressing need for money, would agree to any conditions and immediately forget them. That she did agree to a speedy reimbursement I am positive. That once again she found herself confronted by an angry and threatening creditor, and that in desperation, and with the assistance of Sara Dwight, she stole the diamonds, intending probably to pawn them, is the conclusion to which my experience and investigations have led me.

How she came to select Sara Dwight as an accomplice I am not qualified to state. In my opinion, fear of detection made her seek the aid of a confederate. Sara's flight, with its obviously suspicious surroundings, has an air of prearrangement, suggestive of having been carefully planned to divert suspicion from the real criminal. Sophy Jeffers assured me that Lady Castlecourt had never, to her knowledge, conversed at any length with the housemaid. But Jeffers is a very simple-minded person, whom it would be an easy matter to deceive. That Sara Dwight was her ladyship's accomplice I am positive. That she took the jewels and now has them is also my opinion.

Being convinced of her need of ready money, and of the rashness and lack of balance in her character, I have been expecting that Lady Castlecourt would make some decisive move in the way of selling the diamonds. With this idea agents of mine have been on the watch, but without so far finding any evidence that she has attempted to place the stones on the market. We have found no traces of them either in London or Paris, or the usual depots in Holland or Belgium. It is true that the Castlecourt diamonds, not being remarkable for size, would be easy to dispose of in small, separate lots, but our system of surveillance is so thorough that I do not see how they could escape us. I am of the opinion that the stones are

still in the hands of Sara Dwight, who, whether she is an accomplished thief or not, is probably more wary and more versed in such dealings than Lady Castlecourt.

That her ladyship should have been the object of my suspicions from the start may seem peculiar to those to whom she appears only as a person of rank, wealth and beauty. Before the case came under my notice at all, I had heard her uncontrolled extravagance remarked upon, and that alone, coupled with the fact that Lord Castlecourt is not a peer of vast wealth, and that the lady's moral character is said to be unblemished, would naturally arouse the suspicion of one used to the vagaries and intricacies of the evolution of crime.

During my first interview with her ladyship I watched her closely, and was struck by her pallor, her impatience under questioning, her hardly concealed nervousness, and her indignant repudiation of the suspicions cast upon her servants. All the domestics in her employment agree that she is a kind and generous mistress, and it would be particularly galling to one of her disposition to think that her employees were suffering for her faults. Her answers to many of my questions were vague and evasive, and to both Brison and myself, at two different times, she suggested the possibility of the jewels not being stolen at all, but having been "misaid." Even Brison, whose judgment has been warped by her beauty and rank, was forced to admit the strangeness of this remark.

The description given me by Sophy Jeffers of her ladyship's deportment when the theft was discovered still further strengthened my suspicions. Lady Castlecourt's behavior at this juncture might have passed as natural by those not used to the very genuine hysteria which often attacks criminals. That she was wrought up to a high degree of nervous excitement is acknowledged by all who saw her. It is alleged by Jeffers—quite innocently of any intention to injure her mistress, to whom she appears devoted—that her

ladyship's first emotion on discovering the loss was fear of her husband; that when he entered the room she instinctively tried to conceal the empty jewel case behind her, and that almost her first words to him were assurances that she had not been careless, but had guarded the jewels well.

Fear of Lord Castlecourt was undoubtedly the most prominent feeling she then possessed, and it showed itself with unrestrained frankness in the various ways described above. Afterward she attempted to be more reticent, and adopted an air of what almost appeared indifference, surprising not only myself and Brison, but Jeffers, by her remarks, made with irritated impatience, that they still might "turn up somewhere," and that "she did not see how we could be so sure they were stolen." This change of attitude was even more convincing to me than her former exhibition of alarm. The very candor and childishness with which she showed her varying states of mind would have disarmed most people, but were, to me, almost conclusive proofs of her guilt. She is a woman whose shallow irresponsibility of mind is even more unusual than her remarkable beauty. No one but an old and seasoned criminal, or a creature of extraordinary simplicity, could have behaved with so much audacity in such a situation.

Having arrived at these conclusions, I am not reduced to a passive attitude. I will wait and watch until such time as the diamonds are either pawned or sold. This may not occur for months, though I am inclined to think that her ladyship's need of money will force her to a recklessness which will be her undoing. Sara Dwight may be able to control her to a certain point, but I am under the impression that her ladyship, frightened and desperate, will be a very difficult person to handle.

This brings my statement up to date. At the present writing I am simply awaiting developments, confident that the outcome will prove the verity of my original proposition and the exactitude of my subsequent line of argument.

(The statement of Daisy K. Fairweather Kennedy, late of Necropolis City, Ohio, at present a resident of 15 Farley Street, Knightsbridge, London.)

I believe it is not necessary for me to state how a chamois-skin bag containing one hundred and sixty-two diamonds came into my hands on the evening of May 14th. That it did come into my possession was enough for me. I never before thought that the possession of diamonds could make a woman so perfectly miserable. When I was a young girl in Necropolis City I used to think to own a diamond—even one small one—would be just about the acme of human joy. But Necropolis City is a good way behind me now, and I have found that the owning of a handful of them can be about the most wearing form of misery.

I suppose there are fearless, upright people in the world who would have taken those diamonds straight back to the police station and braved public opinion. It would have been better to have your word doubted, to be tried for a thief, put in jail, and probably complicate the diplomatic relations between England and the United States, than to conceal in your domicile one hundred and sixty-two precious stones that didn't belong to you. I hope everyone understands—and I'm sure everyone does who knows me—that I did not want to keep the miserable things. What good did they do me, anyway, locked up in my jewel box in the upper right-hand bureau drawer?

We knew no peace from that tragic evening when Major and Mrs. Thatcher dined with us. First we tried to think of ways of getting rid of them—of the diamonds, I mean. Cassius, who's just a simple, uncomplicated man, wanted to take them right to the nearest police station and hand them in. I soon showed him the madness of *that*. Was there a soul in London who would have believed our story? Wouldn't the American ambassador himself have had to bow his crested head and tame his heart of fire and admit it was about the fishiest tale he had ever heard?

It would have ruined us forever. Even if Cassius hadn't been deposed from his place as the head of the English branch of the Colonial Box, Tub and Cordage Company, Ltd., of Chicago and St. Louis, who would have known me? The trail of the diamonds would have been over us forever. Lady Sara Gyves would have gone round saying she always thought I had the face of a thief, and the bishop and the two lords I've collected with such care would have cut me dead in the park. I would have received my social quietus forever. And, I just tell you, when I've worked for a thing as hard as I have for that bishop and the two lords and Lady Sara Gyves, I'm not going to give them up without a struggle.

Cassius and I spent two feverish, agonized weeks trying to think what we would do with the diamonds. I never knew before I had so much inventive ability. It was wonderful the things we thought of. One of our ideas was to put a personal in the papers advertising for "Amelia." We spent five consecutive evenings concocting different ones that would have the effect of rousing "Amelia's" curiosity and deadening that of everybody else. It did not seem capable of construction. Twist and turn it as you would, you couldn't state that you had something valuable in your possession for "Amelia" without making the paragraph bristle with a sort of mysterious importance. It was like a trap set and baited to catch the attention of a detective. We did insert one—"Will Amelia kindly publish her present address, and oblige Major and Mrs. Thatcher?"—which, after all, didn't involve us. And for two weeks we read the papers with beating, hopeful hearts, but there was no reply. I thought "Amelia" never saw it. Cassius thought there was no such person.

A month dragged itself away, and there we were with those horrible gems locked in my jewel box. I began to look pale and miserable, and Cassius told me he thought the diamonds were becoming a "fixed idea" with me, and he'd have to take me away for a change.

Once I told him I felt as if I'd never have any peace or be my old gay self again while they were in my possession. He said, that being the case, he'd take them out some night and throw them in the Serpentine, the pond where the despondent people commit suicide. But I dissuaded him from it.

"Perhaps they'll never be claimed," I said. "And some day when we're old we can have them set and Elaine can wear them."

"You might even wear them yourself," Cassius said, trying to cheer me up.

"What would be the good?" I answered, gloomily. "I'd be at least sixty before I'd dare to."

All through June I lived under this wearing strain, and I grew thinner and more nervous day by day. The season which is always so lovely and gay was no longer an exciting and joyous time for me. I drove down Bond Street with a frowning face, and it did not cheer me up at all to see how many people I seemed to know. Looking down the vistas of quiet, asphalted streets, where the lines of sedate house fronts are brightened by polished brasses on the doors and flower boxes at the windows, I was no longer filled with an exhilarating determination to some day be an honored guest in every house that was worth entering. When I drove by the green ovals of the little parks which you can't enter without a private key, I experienced none of my old ambition to have a key, too, and go in and mingle with the aristocracy sitting on wooden benches.

Even meeting the Countess of Belsborough at a reception, and being asked by her in a sociable, friendly way if I knew her cousin John, who was mining somewhere in Mexico or Honduras—she wasn't sure which—did not cheer me up at all. The change in me was extraordinary. When I first came to London, if even a curate or a clerk from the city had asked me such a question, I'd have made an effort to remember John, as if Mexico had been my front garden and I'd played all round Honduras when I was a child.

Now I said to Lady Belsborough that neither Mexico nor Honduras was part of the United States, quite snappishly, as if I thought she was stupid. And all because of those accursed diamonds!

It was toward the end of June, and the days were getting warm, when the climax came.

The pressure of the season was abating. The rhododendrons were dead in the park, and there was dust on the trees. In St. James' the grass was quite worn and patchy, and strangely-clad people lay on it sleeping in the sun. One met a great many American tourists in white shirt-waists and long veils. I thought of the time when I, too, innocently and unthinkingly, had worn a white shirt-waist, and it didn't seem to me such a horrible time, after all. At least, I did not then have one hundred and sixty-two stolen diamonds in my jewel box. My heart was lighter in those days, even if my shirt-waist had cost only a dollar and forty-nine cents at a department store in Necropolis City.

The month ended with a spell of what the English call "frightful heat." It was quite warm weather, and we sat a good deal on the little balcony that juts out from my window over the front door. Farley Street is quiet and rather out of the line of general traffic, so we had chairs and a table there, and used to have tea served under the one palm which was all there was room for. We could not have visitors there, for it opened out of my bedroom. So our tea parties on the balcony were strictly family affairs—just Cassius and Elaine and I.

The last day of the month was really very warm. Every door in the house was open, and the servants went about gasping, with their faces crimson. I dined at home alone that evening, as one of the members of the Box, Tub and Cordage Company was in London at the Carlton, and Cassius was dining with him. I did not expect him home till late, as there would be lots to talk over.

I had not felt well all day. The heat

had given me a headache, and after dinner I lay on the sofa in the sitting room, feeling quite miserable. Only a few of the lamps were lit, and the house was dim and extremely quiet. Being alone that way in the half dark got on my nerves, and I decided I'd go upstairs and go to bed early. I always did hate sitting about by myself, and now more than ever with the diamonds on my conscience.

Our stairs are thickly carpeted, and, as I had on thin satin slippers and a crêpe tea gown, I made no noise at all coming up. I always have a light burning in my room, so when I saw a yellow gleam below the door I did not think anything of it, but just softly pushed the door open and went in. Then I stopped dead where I stood. A man with a soft felt hat on and a handkerchief tied over the lower part of his face was standing in front of the bureau!

He had not heard me, and for a moment I stood without making a sound, watching him. The two gas jets on either side of the bureau were lit, and that part of the room was flooded with light. Very quickly and softly he was turning over the contents of the drawers, taking out laces, gloves and veils, throwing them this way and that out of his way, and opening every box he found. My heart gave a great leap when I saw him seize upon the jewel box, and my mouth, unfortunately, emitted some kind of a sound. I think it was a sort of gasp of relief, but I'm not sure.

Whatever it was, he heard. He gave a start, as if he had been electrified, raised his head and saw me. For just one second he stood staring, and then he said something—of a profane character, I think—and ran for the balcony.

And I ran, too. There was something in the way—a little table, I believe—and he collided with it. That checked him for a moment, and I got to the window first. I threw myself across it with my arms spread out in an attitude like that assumed by Sara Bernhardt when she is barring her lov-

er's exit in "Fedora." But I don't think any actress ever barred her lover's exit with as much determination and zeal as I barred the exit of that burglar.

"You can't go!" I cried, wildly. "You've forgotten something."

He paused just in front of me, and I cried again:

"You haven't got them, they're in the jewelry box."

He moved forward and laid his hand on my arm to push me aside. I felt quite desperate and wailed:

"Oh, don't go without opening the jewelry box! There are some things in it I know you'll like."

He tried to push me out of the way gently, it is true, but with force. But I clung to him, clasped him by the arm with what must have appeared quite an affectionate grip, and continued imploringly:

"Don't be in such a hurry. I'm sorry I interrupted. If you'll promise not to go till you've looked through my things and taken what you want, I'll leave the room. It was quite by accident that I came in."

The burglar let go my arm and looked at me over the handkerchief with a pair of eyes that seemed quite kind and pleasant.

"Really!" he said, in a deep, gentlemanly voice that seemed familiar. "Really, I don't quite understand——"

"I know you don't," I interrupted, impulsively. "How could you be expected to? And I can't explain. It's a most complicated matter, and would take too long. Only don't be frightened and run away till you've taken something. You've endangered your life and risked going to prison to get in here, and wouldn't it be too foolish after that to go without anything? Now, in the jewelry box"—I indicated it, and spoke in what I hoped was a most insinuating tone—"there are some things that I think you'd like. If you'd just look at them——"

"You're a most persuasive lady," said the burglar, "but——"

He moved again toward the window. A feeling of absolute anguish

that he was going without the diamonds pierced me. I threw myself in front of him again, and in some way, I can't tell you how, caught the handkerchief that covered his face and pulled it down. There was the handsome visage and long mustache of Major Thatcher!

I backed away from him in the greatest confusion. He, too, blushed and looked uncomfortable.

"Oh, Major Thatcher!" I murmured. "I beg your pardon. I'm so sorry—I don't know how it happened. I think the end of the handkerchief caught on my bracelet."

"Pray don't mention it," answered the major; "nothing at all."

Then we were both silent, standing opposite one another, not knowing what to say. It is not easy to feaze me, but it must be admitted that the situation was unusual.

"How is Mrs. Thatcher?" I said, desperately, when the silence had become unbearable. And the major replied in his deepest voice and with his most abrupt military air:

"Ethel's very fit. Never was better in her life, thank you. Mr. Kennedy is quite well, I hope?"

"Cassius is enjoying the best of health," I answered. "He's out tonight, I'm sorry to say."

"Just fancy!" said Major Thatcher. Then there was a pause, and he added: "How tiresome!"

I could think of nothing more to say, and again we were silent. It was really the most uncomfortable position I ever was in. The major was a burglar beyond a doubt, but he looked and talked just like a gentleman; besides, he'd dined with us. That makes a great difference. When a man has broken bread at your table as a respectable fellow creature, it's hard to get your mind round to regarding him severely as a criminal. I felt that the only thing to do was to gracefully ignore it all, as you do when some one spills the claret on your best tablecloth. At the same time, there were the diamonds! I could not let the chance escape.

"Oh, Major Thatcher," I said, with an air of suddenly remembering some-

thing, "I don't know whether you know that your wife left a little package here that evening when you dined with us. It was for Amelia."

Major Thatcher looked at me with his most heavily solemn expression.

"To be sure," he murmured; "for Amelia."

"Well," I went on, trying to impart to my words a light society tone, "you know we can't find her. Very stupid of us, I have no doubt. But we've tried, and we can't, anywhere."

Major Thatcher stared blankly at the dressing table.

"Strange, 'pon my word!" he said.

"So, Major Thatcher, if you don't mind, I'll give it back to you. I think, all things considered, it will be best for you to give it to Amelia yourself."

I went toward the dressing table.

"You don't mind, do you?" I said, over my shoulder, as I opened the jewelry box.

"Not at all, not at all," answered the major. "Anything to oblige a lady."

I drew out the sack of chamois skin. "Here it is," I said, holding it out to him. "You'll find it in perfect condition and quite complete. I'm so sorry that we couldn't seem to locate Amelia. Not knowing the rest of her name was rather inconvenient. There were dozens of Amelias in the directory."

The major took the sack and put it in his breast pocket.

"Dozens of Amelias," he repeated, slapping his pocket. "Who'd have thought it!"

"We even advertised," I continued. "Perhaps you saw the personal? It was in the morning *Herald*, and was very short and noncommittal. But no one answered it."

"We saw it," said the major. "Yes, I recollect quite distinctly seeing it. It—it indicated to us—aw—ah—"

The major reddened and paused, pulling his mustache.

"That we hadn't found Amelia and still had the present?" I answered, in a sprightly tone. "That was just it. And so you came to get it? Very kind of you, indeed, Major Thatcher."

The major bowed. He was really

a very fine looking, well-mannered man. If he only had been the honest, respectable person we first thought him, I would have liked to add him to my collection. I'm sure if you knew him better he would have been much more interesting than the bishop and the lords.

"The kindness is on your side," he said. "And now, Mrs. Kennedy, I think—I think perhaps"—he looked at the window that gave on the balcony—"I think I'd better—"

"You must be going!" I cried, just as I say it to the bishop when he puts down his cup and looks at the clock. "How unfortunate! But, of course, your other engagements—"

I checked myself, suddenly realizing that it wasn't just the thing to say to the major. When you're talking to a burglar it doesn't seem delicate or thoughtful to allude to his "other engagements." That I made such a break is due to the fact that I'd never talked to a burglar before, and was bound to be a little green.

The major did not seem to mind.

"Exactly so," he said. "My time is just now much occupied. I—er—I—"

He looked again at the window.

"I—er—entered that way," he said, "but perhaps—"

"I don't think I'd go out that way if I were you," I answered, hurriedly. "It would look so queer if anyone saw you."

"Would the other and more usual exit be safe?" he asked. His eye as it met mine was charged with a keener intelligence than I had seen in it before.

"It would have to be," I answered, with spirit. "What do you suppose the servants would think if they saw you coming out of here? This, Major Thatcher, is my room."

"Dear me!" said the major. "I suppose it is. I never thought of that."

"Wait here till I see if it is all right," I said. "And then I'll come back and tell you."

I went into the hall and looked over the banister. The gas was burning

faintly, and a bar of pink lamplight fell out from the half drawn portières of the drawing room. There was not a sound. I knew the servants were all in the back part of the house, quite safe till eleven o'clock, when, if we were home, they turned out the lights and locked up. I stole softly back into my room. The major was standing in front of the mirror, untying the handkerchief that hung round his neck.

"It's all right," I assured him, in an unconsciously lowered voice. "You can go quite easily. I'll let you out. Only, you mustn't make the least bit of noise."

He thrust the handkerchief in his pocket and put on his hat, pulling the brim down over his eyes. I must confess he didn't look half so distinguished this way. When the handkerchief was gone, I saw he wore a flannel shirt with a turned-down collar, and with his hat shading his face he certainly did seem a strange sort of man for me to be conducting down the stairs at half-past ten at night. If Perkins, who'd come to us bristling with respectability from a distinguished, Evangelical, aristocratic family, should meet us, I would never hold up my head again.

"Now, if you hear Perkins," I whispered, "for Heaven's sake hide somewhere. Run back to my room if you can't go anywhere else. Perkins *must* not see you."

The major growled out some reply, and we tiptoed breathlessly across the hall to the stair head. I was much more frightened than he was. I know as I stole from step to step my heart kept beating faster and faster. Such awful things might have happened—Perkins suddenly appear to put out the lights; Cassius come home early from the dinner and open the front door just as I was about to let the major out. When we reached the door I was quite faint, while the major seemed as cool as if he'd been paying a call.

"Very kind of you, I'm sure," he said, trying to take off his hat. "I shan't forget it."

"Oh, never mind being polite!" I gasped. "You've got the diamonds.

That's all that matters. Good-night. Give my regards to Mrs. Thatcher."

And he was gone! I shut the door and crept upstairs. First I felt faint, and then I felt hysterical. When Cassius came home at eleven I was lying on the sofa in tears, and all I could say to him was to sob:

"The diamonds are gone! The diamonds are gone!"

He thought I'd gone mad at first, and then when I finally made him understand he was nearly as excited as I. He went downstairs and brought up a bottle of champagne, and we celebrated at midnight up in our room. We had to tell lies to Perkins afterward to explain how we came to be one bottle short. But what did lies matter, or even Perkins' opinion of us? We were no longer crushed under the weight of one hundred and sixty-two diamonds that didn't belong to us.

That is the history of my connection with the case. From that night I've never seen or heard of the stones, nor have I seen Major or Mrs. Thatcher. The diamonds entered our possession and departed from it exactly as I have told, and, though my statement may call for great credulity on the part of my readers, all I can say is that I am willing to vouch for the truth of every word of it.

(Statement of Gladys, Marchioness of Castlecourt.)

I am sure if anyone was ever punished for her misdeeds it was I. I suppose I ought to say sins, but it is such an unpleasant word! I cannot imagine myself committing sins, and yet that is just what I seem to have done. I couldn't have been more astonished if some one had told me I was going to commit a murder. One thing I have learned: you do not know what you may do till you have been tried and tempted. And then you do wrong before you realize it, and all of a sudden it comes upon you that you are a criminal, quite unexpectedly, and no one is more surprised than you. I certainly know I was the most surprised person in London when I realized that I—

But there, I am wandering all about, and I want to tell my story simply and shortly.

Everybody knows that when I married Lord Castlecourt I was poor. What everybody does not know is that I was a natural spendthrift. Extravagance was in my blood, as drinking or the love of cards is in the blood of some men. I had never had any money at all. I used to wear the same gloves for years, and always made my own frocks—not badly, either. I've made gowns that Lady Bundy said— But that has nothing to do with it; I'm getting away from the point.

As I said before, I was poor. I didn't know how extravagant I was till I married and Lord Castlecourt gave me six hundred pounds a year to dress on. It was a fortune to me. I'd never thought one woman could have so much. The first two years of our married life I did not run over it, because we lived most of the time in the country, and I was unused to it, and spent it slowly and carefully. I was still unaccustomed to it when, after my second boy was born, Herbert brought me to town for my first season since our marriage.

Then I began to spend money, quantities of it, for it seemed to me that six hundred pounds a year was absolutely inexhaustible. When I saw anything pretty in a shop I bought it, and I generally forgot to ask the price. The shop people were always kind and agreeable, and seemed to have forgotten about it as completely as I.

After I had bought one thing they would urge me to look at something else which was put away in a drawer or laid out in a cardboard box, and if I liked it I bought that, too. If I ever paused to think that I was buying a great deal, I contented myself with the assurance that I had six hundred pounds a year, which was so much I would never get to the end of it.

After that first season a great many bills came in, and I was quite surprised to see I'd spent already—with the year hardly half gone—more than my six hundred pounds. I could not under-

stand how it had happened, and I asked Herbert about it and showed him some of my bills, and for the first time in our married life he was angry with me. He scolded me quite sharply and told me I must keep within my allowance. I was hurt, and also rather muddled with all these different accounts—most of which I could not remember—and I made up my mind not to consult Herbert any more, as it only vexed him and made him cross to me. And that I cannot bear. All the world must love me. If there is a servant maid in the house who does not like me—and I can feel it in a minute if she doesn't—I must make her, or she must go away. But my husband, the best and finest man in the world, to have him annoyed with me and scolding me over stupid bills—never again would that happen. I showed him no more of them; in fact, I generally tore them up as they came in, for fear I should leave them lying about and he would find them. If I could help it, nothing in the world was ever going to come between Herbert and me.

I also made good resolutions to be more careful in my expenditures. And I really tried to keep them. I don't know how it happened that they did not seem to get kept. But both in London and in Paris I certainly did spend a great deal. I'm sure I don't know how much. I did little accounts on the back of notes, and they were so confusing, and I seemed to have spent so much more than I thought I had, that I gave up doing them. After I'd covered the back of two or three notes with figures, I became so low-spirited I couldn't enjoy anything for the rest of the day. I did not see that that did anybody any good, so I ceased keeping the accounts. And what was the use of keeping them? If I had not the money to pay them with, why should I make myself miserable by thinking about them? I thought it much more sensible to try to forget them, and most of the time I did.

It went on that way for two years. When I got bills with things written across the bottom in red ink I paid part

of them; never all. I never paid all of anything. Once or twice tradesmen wrote me letters saying they must have their money, and then I went to see them and told them how kind it was of them to trust me, and how I would pay them everything soon, and they seemed quite pleased and satisfied. I always intended doing it. I don't know where I thought the money was coming from, but you never can tell what may happen. Some friends of Herbert had a place near the Scotch border and found a coal mine in the forest. Herbert has no lands near Scotland, but he has in other places, and he may find a coal mine, too. I merely cite this as an example of the strange ways things turn out. I didn't exactly expect that Herbert would find a coal mine, but I did expect that money would turn up in some unexpected way and help me out of my difficulties.

The beginning of the series of really terrible events of which I am writing was the purchase of a Russian sable jacket from a furrier in Paris called Bolkonsky. It was in the early spring of last year. I had had no dealings with Bolkonsky before. A friend told me of the jacket and took me there. It was a real *occasion*. I knew the moment I saw it that it was one of those chances with which one rarely meets. It fitted me like a charm, and I bought it for a thousand pounds. That miserable Bolkonsky told me the payments might be made in any way I liked, and at "madame's own time." I also bought some good turquoises, that were going for nothing, from a jeweler upstairs somewhere near the Rue de la Paix, who was selling out the jewels of an actress. It was these two people who wrecked me.

Not that they were my only debtors. I knew by this time that I owed a great deal. When I thought about it I was frightened, and so I tried not to think. But sometimes when I was awake at night, and everything looked dark and depressed, I wondered what I would do if something did not happen. In these moments I thought of telling my husband, and I buried my head in

the pillow and turned cold with misery. What would Herbert say when he found out his wife was thousands of pounds in debt—the Marquis of Castlecourt, who had never owed a penny and considered it a disgrace.

Perhaps he would be so horrified and disgusted he would send me away from him, back to Ireland or to the Continent. And what would happen to me then?

That summer we went to Castlecourt Marsh Manor, and there my anxieties became almost unbearable. Bolkonsky began to dun me most cruelly. Other creditors wrote me letters, urging for payments. The jeweler from whom I had bought the turquoises sent me a letter telling me if I didn't settle his account by September he would sue me. And, finally, Bolkonsky sent a man over, whom I saw in London, and who told me that unless the sable jacket was paid for within two months he would "lay the matter before Lord Castlecourt."

We went across to Paris in September, and there I saw those dreadful people. My other French and English creditors I could manage, but I could do nothing with either Bolkonsky or the jeweler. They spoke harshly to me—as no one has ever spoken to me before—and Bolkonsky told me that "it was known Lord Castlecourt was honest, and paid his debts, whatever his wife was." I prayed him for time, and finally wept—wept to that horrible Jew, and there was another man in the office, too, who saw me. But I was lost to all sense of pride or reserve. I had only one feeling left in me—terror, agony, that they would tell my husband, and he would despise me, and leave me.

My misery seemed to have some effect on Bolkonsky, and he told me he would give me a month to pay up. It was then the tenth of September. I waited for a week, in a sort of frenzy of hope that a miracle would occur and the money come into my hands in some unexpected way. But, of course, nothing did occur. By the first of October the one thousand pounds was no nearer. It was then that the desperate idea en-

tered my mind which has nearly ruined me and caused me such suffering that the memory of it will stay with me forever.

The Castlecourt diamonds, set in a necklace and valued at nine thousand pounds, were in my possession. I often wore them, and they were carried about by my maid—a faithful and honest creature called Sophy Jeffers. On one of my first trips to Paris a friend of mine had taken me to the office of a well-known dealer in precious and artificial stones, who, without its being generally known, did a sort of pawn-broking business among the upper classes. My friend had gone there to pawn a pearl necklace, and had told me all about it—how much she obtained on the necklace, and how she hoped to redeem it within the year, and how she was to have it copied in imitation pearls. The idea that came to me was to go to this place and pawn the Castlecourt diamonds, having them duplicated in paste.

I went there on the second day of October. How awful it was! I wore a heavy veil, and gave a fictitious name. Several men looked at the diamonds, and I noticed that they looked at me and whispered together. Finally they told me they would give me four thousand pounds on them, at some interest—I've forgotten what it was now—and that they would replace them with paste so that only an expert could tell the difference. The next day I went back, and they gave me the money. I do not think they had any idea who I was. At any rate, while the papers were full of speculations about the Castlecourt diamonds, they made no sign.

I paid off all my debts, both in Paris and London. I even paid a year's interest on the diamonds. For a short time I breathed again, and was gay and light-hearted. My husband would never know that I had not paid my bills for five years, and had been threatened with a lawsuit. It was delightful to get rid of this fear, and I was quite my old self. I suppose I ought to have felt more guilty; but when one is relieved of a great weight, one's conscience is

not so sensitive as it gets when there is really nothing to be sensitive about.

It was after I had grown accustomed to feeling free and unworried that I began to realize what I had done. I had stolen the diamonds. I was a thief! It did not comfort me much to think that no one might ever find it out. In fact, I do not think it comforted me at all, and I know in the beginning I expected it would. It was what I had done that rankled in me. I felt that I would never be peaceful again till they were redeemed and put back in their old settings. That was what I continually dreamed of. It seemed to me if I could see them once more in their own case I would be happy and care-free as I had been in those first perfect years of my married life.

The fear that at this time most haunted me and was most terrifying was that my husband might discover what I had done. His wife, that he had so loved and trusted, had become a thief! No one who has not gone through it knows how I felt. I did not know anyone could suffer so. I went out constantly, to try and forget; and, when things were very cheerful and amusing, I sometimes did. And then I remembered—I was a thief; I had stolen my husband's diamonds, and, if he ever found it out, what would happen to me?

This was the position I was in when the false diamonds were taken. It was the last thing in the world I had thought could happen. When, that night of the Duke of Duxbury's dinner, I saw the empty case and Jeffers' terrified face, the world reeled around me. I could not for the moment take it in. Only, in my mind, the diamonds had become a sort of nightmare; anything to do with them was a menace, and I followed an instinct that had possession of me when I tried to hide the empty case from my husband.

Then, when my mind had cleared and I had time to think, I saw that if they recovered the paste necklace they might find out that it was not real, and all would be lost. It was a horrible situation. I really did not know what

I wanted. If the diamonds were found, and seen to be false, it would all come out, and Herbert would know I was a thief. When I thought of this, I tried to divert the detectives from hunting for them, and I told that silly, sheepish Mr. Brison that I did not see how he could be so sure they were stolen, that they might have been mislaid. Mr. Brison seemed surprised, and that made me angry, because, after all, a diamond necklace is not the sort of thing that gets mislaid, and I felt I had been foolish, and not gained anything by being so.

The days passed, and nothing was heard of the necklace. I wished desperately now that it would be found. For how, unless it was, could I eventually redeem the real diamonds and once more feel honest and respectable? If I suddenly appeared with them, how could I explain it? Everybody would say I had stolen them, unless I invented some story about their being lost and then found; and I am not clever at inventing stories. As to where I should get the money to redeem them, I often thought of that, but never could think of any way that sounded possible and reasonable. I have always waited for "things to turn up," and they generally did, but in this case nothing that I wanted or expected turned up. Besides, four thousand pounds is a good deal of money to come into one's hands suddenly and unexpectedly. If it were a smaller sum, it might, but four thousands pounds was too much. There was nobody to die and leave it to me, and I certainly could not steal it, or make it myself.

So, as one may see, I was beset with troubles on all sides. The season wore itself away, and I was glad to be done with it. For the first time, there had been no pleasure in it. Anxieties that no one guessed were always with me, and always I found myself surreptitiously watching my husband, to see if he suspected, to see if he showed any symptoms of growing cold to me, and being indifferent. As I drove through the park in the carriage these dreary thoughts were always at my heart, and

it was heavy as lead. I forgot the passers-by who were so amusing, and, with my head hanging, looked into my lap. Suppose Herbert guessed? Suppose Herbert found out? These were the questions that went circling through my brain and never stopped. Sometimes when Herbert was beside me I suddenly wanted to cry out:

"Herbert, I took the diamonds! I was the thief! I can't hide it any more or live in this uncertainty. All I want to know is, do you hate me, and are you going to leave me?"

But I never did it. I looked at Herbert and was afraid. What would I do if he left me? Go back to Ireland and die.

We went to Castlecourt Marsh Manor in the end of June. By this time I had begun to feel quite ill. Herbert insisted on my consulting a doctor before I left town, and the doctor said my heart was all wrong and something was the matter with my nerves. But it was only the sense of guilt, that every day grew more oppressive. I thought I might feel better in the country. I had always disliked it, and now it seemed like a harbor of refuge where I could be quiet with my children. I had grown to hate London. It was London that had played upon my weaknesses and drawn me into all my trouble. I had not run into debt in the country, and, after all, I had never been as happy as I was the two years after our marriage, when we had lived at Castlecourt Marsh Manor. Those were my *beaux jours*! How bright and beautiful they seemed now when I looked back on them from these dark days of fear and disgrace!

It was not much better in the country. A change of scene cannot make a difference when the trouble is a dark secret. And that dark secret kept growing darker every day. I feared to speak of the diamonds to Herbert, and yet every letter that came for him filled me with alarm lest it was either to say that they were found or that they were not found. Herbert went up to London at intervals and saw Mr. Gilsey, and at night when he came

home I trembled so that I found it difficult to stand till he had told me all that Mr. Gilsey had said. Once when he was beginning to tell me that Mr. Gilsey had some idea they had traced the diamonds to Paris, I fainted, and it was some time before they could bring me back.

July was very hot, and I gave that as the cause of my changed appearance and listless manner. I was really in wretched health, and Herbert became exceedingly worried about me. He suggested that we should go on the Continent for a trip, but I shrank from the thought of it. I felt as if the sight of Paris, where the diamonds were waiting to be redeemed, would kill me outright. I did not want to leave Castlecourt Marsh Manor to go anywhere. I only wanted to be happy again—to be the way I was before I had taken the diamonds.

And I knew now that this could never be till I told my husband. I knew that to win back my peace of mind I had to confess all and hear him say he forgave me. I tried to several times, but it was impossible. As the moment that I had chosen for confession approached my heart beat so that I could scarcely breathe, and I trembled like a person in a chill. With Herbert looking at me so kindly, so tenderly, the words died away on my lips or I said something quite different from what I had intended saying. It was useless. As the days went by I knew that I would never dare tell, that for the rest of my life I would be crushed under the sense of guilt that seemed too heavy to be borne.

It was late one afternoon in the middle of July that the crash came. Never, never shall I forget that day! So dark and awful at first, and then— But I must follow the story just as it happened.

Herbert and I had had tea in the library. It was warm weather, and the windows that led to the terrace were wide open. Through them I could see the beautiful landscape—rolling hills with great trees dotted over them, all the colors brighter and deeper than at

midday, for the sun was getting low. I was sitting by one of the windows, looking out on this and thinking how different had been my feelings when I had come here as a bride, and loved it all, and been so full of joy. My hands hung limp over the arms of the chair; I had no desire to move or speak. It is so agonizing when you are miserable looking back on days that were happy!

As I was sitting this way Thomas, one of the footmen, came in with the letters. I noticed that he had quite a packet of them. Some were mine, and I laid them on the table at my elbow. Idly and without interest I saw that in Herbert's bunch there was a small box, such as jewelry is sent about in. Thomas left the room, and I continued looking out of the window until I suddenly heard Herbert give a suppressed exclamation. I turned toward him and saw that he had the open box in his hand.

"What does this mean?" he said. "What an extraordinary thing! Look here, Gladys."

And he came toward me holding out the box. It was full of cotton wool, and lying on this were a great quantity of unset diamonds of different sizes. My heart gave a leap into my throat. I sat up, clutching the arms of the chair.

"What are they?" I said, hearing my voice suddenly high and loud. "Where did they come from?"

"I don't know anything about them. It's too odd! See what's written on this piece of paper that was inside the box."

He held out a small piece of paper, on which the creases of several folds were plainly marked. Across it, in typing, ran two sentences. I snatched the paper and read the words:

We don't want *your* diamonds. You can keep them and with them accept our kind regards.

The paper fluttered to my feet. I knew in a moment what it all meant. The thieves had discovered that the diamonds were paste and had returned them. I was conscious of Herbert's

startled face suddenly charged with an expression of sharp anxiety as he cried:

"Why, Gladys, what is it? You're as white as death."

He came toward me, but I motioned him away and rose to my feet. I knew then that the hour had come, and though I suspect I *was* very white, I did not feel so frightened as I had done in the past.

"Those *are* your diamonds, Herbert," I said, quietly and distinctly, "or, perhaps, I ought to say those are the substitutes for them. *Your* diamonds are in Paris, at Barriere's, *au quatri me*, on the Rue Croix des Petits Champs."

"Gladys," he exclaimed, "what do you mean? What are you talking about? You look so white and strange. Sit down, darling, and tell me what you mean."

"Oh, Herbert," I cried, with my voice suddenly full of agony, "let me tell you! Don't stop me. If you're angry with me and hate me, wait till I've finished before you say so. I've got to confess it all. I've got to, dear. You must listen to me and not frighten me till I have done. For if I don't tell you now I shall certainly die."

And then I told. I told it all. I didn't leave out a single thing. My first bills and Bolkonsky and the jeweler and the pawnbroking place and everything were in it. Once I was started, it was not so hard, and I poured it out. I didn't try to make it better or ask to be forgiven. But when it was all finished I said, in a voice that I could hear was suddenly husky and quavering:

"And now I suppose you'll not like me any more. It's quite natural that you shouldn't. I only ask one thing, and I know, of course, I have no right to ask it—that is, that you won't send me away from you. I have been very wicked. I suppose I ought to be put in prison. But, oh, Herbert, no matter

what I've been, I've loved you! That's something."

I could not go any further. And there was no need. For my dear husband did not seem angry at all. He took me, all weeping and trembling, into his arms and said the sweetest things to me—the sort of things one doesn't write down with a pen—just between him and me.

And I? I turned my face into his shoulder and cried feebly. No one knows how I felt except a person who has been completely miserable and suddenly finds her misery ended. It is really worth being miserable to thoroughly appreciate the joy of being happy again.

Well, that is really the end of my statement. Herbert went to Paris a few days later and redeemed the diamonds, and they are now being set in imitation of the old settings, which are lost. I would not go to Paris with him. Nor will I go to London next season. Both places are too full of horrible memories. Perhaps some day I shall feel about them as I did before the diamonds were taken, but now I do not want to leave the country at all. Besides, we can economize here, and the four thousand pounds necessary to get back the stones was a good deal for Herbert to have to pay out just now. And then, it is so sweet and peaceful in the country. Nothing troubles one. Oh, how delightful a thing it is to have an easy conscience! One does not know how good it is till one has lost it.

This finishes my statement. I dare say it is a very bad one, for I am not clever at all. But it has the one merit of being entirely truthful, and I have told everything—just how wicked I was and just why I was so wicked. Nothing has been held back and nothing has been set down falsely. It is an unprejudiced and accurate account of my share in the Castlecourt diamond case.



NOT ACCORDING TO SCHEDULE



(B) Mary Stewart Cutting



HAVEN'T you any coffee spoons, Kitty? I thought you had a couple of dozen when you went to house-keeping."

Marcia, with her sleeves rolled up from her round white arms, was rummaging in the sideboard, as she knelt beside it on the floor, her brown eyes peering into the corners.

"Yes, of course I have coffee spoons. Aren't they there? I'm sure I don't know *what* becomes of things."

Young Mrs. Fosdyke, stout and matronly, held a fat and placid year-old baby on her lap with one arm, while with the other hand she lunged out intermittently to pick up a much-chewed rubber dog cast upon the floor by the infant. "Oh, now I remember; they're at the bank, with the rest of the silver—we sent them there the summer we went to the seashore, and forgot to take them out again. I know it's dreadful to get in the habit of living in this picnic fashion; I'm ashamed sometimes to have anyone come here. Not that I mind your having asked Mrs. Devereaux for Thanksgiving, Marcia; I don't want you to feel that way for a minute. I think it was nice of you to want to. If *you* don't mind having her here, I'm sure I don't. You know I've had such a time changing servants; and when you have three babies——"

Mrs. Fosdyke was accustomed to anticipate possible astonishment at the size of her young family by stating tersely to begin with that the three were all of the same age; if this were not literally true, it was true enough to account for the disposal of most of her

time. In a small house, on a small income, with one maid, all departments cannot receive attention; under such circumstances something has to go. Mrs. Fosdyke's attention went, rightly enough, to the children; there were no graces of management left for the household—there couldn't be; that was one reason why she never invited company any more. She felt apologetic even before her sister.

"I wish things were a little nicer here—but I know just how you feel about Mrs. Devereaux. No matter how rich a person is, it seems sort of desolate to be alone at a hotel in a small town on a holiday—Thanksgiving Day especially. And she was so good to you in Paris. I shall never forget it."

"I'm sure I never shall," said Marcia.

She saw with retrospective vision the scene of two years ago, when she, a terrified girl of twenty, just recovering from an illness, had missed connections with her party at a railway station, and had been blessedly taken in charge by a stranger whose spoken name carried recognition with it to any American abroad. Marcia had been taken to Mrs. Devereaux's luxurious house for the day, put to bed, comforted, telegrams and messages sent hither and thither to her friends; truly it was the kind of a thing one does not forget, that must claim gratitude forever.

She went on now: "I can't get over our meeting in the street here in this place, just the day we both came—the strangest coincidence! I could hardly believe my eyes. And then to drive back to her rooms with her and find myself telling her all I've been doing, just as if I'd known her always—I'm sure, though, I feel as if I had. I do

want to do something for her so much—it doesn't make any real difference, her being so rich and grand. And then I thought of our Thanksgiving dinner, and she seemed so pleased, and accepted at once. Of course she stipulated that we were to promise not to make any difference on her account, but I do want to have everything as pretty and characteristic as possible. And you needn't bother a bit about anything, Kitty. I'll do all the work, and there's a whole week to get ready in. We'll have Frank bring your wedding silver from the bank; you had so many lovely large pieces."

"I had ten cut glass and silver loving cups," annotated Kitty, in the tone of injury the recollection always produced in the light of her present needs. "It will take you hours and days to clean all those things, Marcia; that's why I never use them. When you have three babies all the same age——"

"Kersley will help me," said Marcia, deftly introducing another subject.

"Kersley!" There was deep surprise in Kitty's voice; she turned to fix her eyes on her sister. Marcia flushed independently of her will.

"Yes—didn't I tell you? He's coming out to his brother's over Thanksgiving."

"Oh!" said Kitty, with significance; she made a precipitate lunge for the rubber dog. There was an alert tone in her voice when she spoke again:

"Marcia."

"Well?"

"How long is this thing to go on? Are you engaged to Kersley Battersby, or are you not? For if you're not, I don't think it's decent to keep him dangling on in this way any longer."

"Oh, Kitty, do stop!" Marcia ceased her investigations to relapse into a jumbled heap on the rug, her chin resting on her hand, her dark, vivacious little face tense. "I suppose I *do* consider that I'm engaged, if you *will* have me say it; he's the only man I could ever care for, but I'm not going to let *him* know it, not until he gets on his feet—not while he's only making fifteen dollars here and twenty dollars

there, and some weeks not even that, painting labels for tomato cans and patent medicines. It does seem a pity that, after all the studying in Paris and winning the prize for his portraits in the Salon, it should take him so long to get a start here. I suppose you have to have a 'pull,' as in everything else. If he once knew that I really cared for him he'd lose his head and want to be married out of hand. I couldn't do a thing with him. He'd insist that it would help him to work if I were near all the time."

"Perhaps it would," suggested Kitty.

"Yes, and have all his family say that I've ruined his prospects—you can imagine how pleasant *that* would be! Everyone says that if a poor artist is hampered at the beginning he has no career at all. I enjoy things as they are, anyway, and if Kersley doesn't it's his own lookout. He's a perfect baby, great, big, blue-eyed, ridiculous, unpractical thing! What do you suppose he did when he was in Chester last month, just after I'd left there? Walked all the way into town and back, twenty miles—he hadn't enough money for his car fare—to buy me a little trumpery pin I wanted, when they had the identical thing on sale at the little shop by the station! Wasn't that like him? And with all his artistic talent, I have to tell him what kind of a necktie to get. Imagine him, with *his* hair, in a scarlet one, when he looks so adorable in dull blue. Let's change the subject. Is this your best centerpiece, with the color all washed out?"

"Yes."

"Then I'll finish that lace one I'm making and put yellow under it. Yellow is to be the color scheme, Kitty. I'm going to present you with some of those lovely glasses I saw at Ketterer's, with gilt flowers on them. I want you to let me pay for the chrysanthemums and all the extras—a few palms can be hired; they add so much to the effect. You know I got the money for those illustrations yesterday, and I don't care whether I have any clothes or not. I just want to do my prettiest for a Thanksgiving for Mrs. Devereaux."

"Very well, dear," said Kitty.

"I should think that woman wouldn't want such a time made over her," said Mr. Fosdyke to his wife, disgustedly, in private. There are married men who may on occasion be mistaken for bachelors, but Mr. Fosdyke was not of that ilk; the respectable bondage of one wedded to family claims was stamped upon him as with a die, in spite of a humorous tendency that was sometimes trying to his wife. "What's the sense? With all her millions she must be used to everything. I should think she'd like something plain and homelike for a change, instead of all this fuss and feathers. I'm worn out with it already. There seems to be a perfect upheaval downstairs, with all Marcia's decorations and color schemes and 'artistic effects.' My arm's broken lugging loving cups home from the bank—they weigh a ton. Why can't Mrs. Devereaux take us as we are?"

"Now, Frank, I've told you how Marcia feels about it," said his wife, reprovingly. "You know how intense she is—it gives her positive satisfaction to show her gratitude by working her fingers off and spending all the money she's got. She wants to make it a special occasion."

"Well, she's doing it," said Frank Fosdyke, with, however, a relenting smile; he was fond of whole-souled little Marcia. "I say, though, Kitty, what's Kersley doing here all the time? I thought he was living in New York. I can't go anywhere that I don't see that big smile of his and the gray suit. I'm always running across him with Marcia. It makes me feel like a fool. Am I to treat them as if they were engaged, or not?"

Mrs. Fosdyke shook her head. "Not yet."

"Can't he stop her shillyshallying?"

"Frank, I said 'Not yet.'"

"All right," said Frank, resignedly, moving around the darkened room, as he disrobed, with the catlike step of one whose ever haunting fear is that he may wake the baby.

Marcia had decreed against the old-fashioned, middle-of-the-day Thanks-

giving dinner; half-past seven was early enough. "And it ought to be eight," she added, ruefully. "At any rate, the babies will be asleep, and Mrs. Fogarty is going to let her Maggie come and sit upstairs with them. Thank goodness, Ellen can cook the dinner, with my help, and wait on the table afterward. She's as nice and interested as she can be, and I'll keep her in good humor. I've promised to buy her a lovely new cap and apron. We've just decided what to have for the nine courses."

"Nine courses!"

"Now, Kitty, it's no more trouble to have nine courses than two, if you manage properly. I'll make a number of the dishes the day before, and Ellen can see to the turkey herself; I'll show you my bill of fare afterward. I'm going to have the loveliest little menu cards, with golden pumpkins in wheat sheaves painted on them—so nice and Thanksgivingy! You've seen the yellow paper cases I've made for the ice pudding, and the candle shades—the color scheme, you know, is yellow. I'm going to ornament the dishes for the almonds and raisins and olives and the candied ginger and other things in the same way. Now, please don't worry about anything, Kitty! If people only make the arrangements beforehand, it's no trouble at all. It's all in the way one plans, and having a system about things."

"I hope so," said Mrs. Fosdyke; for she had her misgivings. In house-keeping it is only too often that two and two fail to make four.

Kersley Battersby, tall and handsome, coming in gayly at four o'clock on Thanksgiving afternoon, during a brief interval of the festivities at his brother's house, stopped short at the sight of Marcia's face.

"What's up?" he asked, reaching out his arms with the unconsciousness of habit, while Marcia, in her blue gingham gown, as mechanically retreated. Her tone was tragic.

"Ellen says she won't wait on the table; she says there's work for ten in

the kitchen, and no lady would ask it of her. And I had it all arranged so beautifully. I don't know what we're to do. Kitty and I have been busy every minute, and Frank has had to take care of the babies all day. I didn't mean to make everyone so uncomfortable. He's gone out now, and she's upstairs with a headache."

"Well, you know you've always got me to fall back on," said Kersley, firmly. "My word, but the dining room looks fine, though! I wouldn't know it for the same place." His gaze rested on the pretty scene with genuine admiration.

Loving cups in the corner of the room held the tall, yellow chrysanthemums against the florist's palms; yellow chrysanthemums waved from the vine-draped mantel and drooped from the prettiest loving cup of all over the yellow-lined lace centerpiece set on the satin-smooth "best" tablecloth. The silver was polished to perfection. The new goblets with their gift flowers shone like bubbles, and on the sideboard a golden pumpkin hollowed into a dish among trailing vines was heaped high with yellow oranges and crimson apples and pearly hothouse grapes.

"Oh, yes, this is all right," sighed Marcia, "and the cooking is, and Frank has had his dress suit pressed and Kitty's gown is dear. But, Kersley, the dinner!" Her swimming eyes looked at him helplessly as she pushed back her disheveled hair. "You can't have nine courses with no one to serve them. Ellen even refuses to bring anything in. We can't get up and keep running around the table! It makes the whole thing a failure—worse than that, ridiculous. I didn't mind how hard I worked for dear Mrs. Devereaux, but I did want it all to be right."

"Poor girl!" said Kersley, tenderly, moving sympathetically very, very near her, with a repetition of the arm movement. "You're tired."

"Now, Kersley, please don't." Marcia again retreated with glowing cheeks. She tried to keep an unexpected tremulousness out of her voice. "I have enough on my mind without having

you, too. If I were to spoil all your prospects now, I'd never forgive myself."

"You get so in the habit of saying that absurd thing," began Kersley, doggedly, "that— Never mind, never mind, Marcia dear. I won't bother you now. But you'll have to let me have my way in one thing, anyway—I'm going to help you out; I'm going to stay and wait on the table myself."

"Kersley!"

"I'll make a bang-up waiter; do it in style."

"Kersley!"

"Just pretend I'm the butler. It's been done lots of times before, you know; it's not a bit original. And I'd like to do something for Mrs. Devereaux, too, good old multi-millionairess. I owe her one for being such a trump to you. I'll make her one of my omelets, too, if Ellen will let me."

"But Mrs. Devereaux will recognize you!" Marcia felt wildly that she was half assenting, in spite of the absurdity of it.

"Recognize the butler? She won't know that he exists except to pass her things. Besides, she's only seen me a couple of times."

"But the family party at your brother's?"

"They'll have to get along without me. I'll cut back now and tell them, and get my dress suit, and then I'll turn myself loose in your kitchen. It's all decided, Marcia." He smiled brilliantly down at her from the height of his six feet, as Kersley could smile sometimes, when he wanted to get his own way. His finger tips touched her curling locks on his way past the ottoman upon which she had dropped.

She sat there after he had gone, her chin supported by her hand, her dark eyes looking intently before her into the yellow chrysanthemums. In spite of her boast to Kitty that she was satisfied with "things as they were," there were moments when a long-drawn-out future of joy withheld pressed upon little Marcia with strange heaviness—moments when it was hard to be always wise for two; there were, indeed,

sudden, inexplicable moments when she longed weakly to give herself up to the alluring blissfulness of Kersley's kisses on her soft lips, no matter how impractical he was. But she was too stanchly eager to do what was best for him to give way in the conduct of life; it was even a giddy sort of thing that she had given way to him in anything.

If a nervous and uncertain hilarity characterized the atmosphere of the dinner table that night, Mrs. Devereaux, in her black lace and diamonds, was happily unaware of its cause in the antics of the obsequious butler, who in the intervals of his calling threw kisses from behind the guest to the yellow-gowned Marcia, attempted to poise in the attitude of flight or that of benediction, or indulged in other pantomimes as extraordinary.

It was almost a relief when the intervals between the courses were unduly prolonged and conversation could proceed without spasmodic jerks on the part of the entertainers. Mrs. Devereaux herself, a rather slight, elderly woman with soft white hair elaborately arranged, and kind, brown eyes, responded with evident pleasure to Marcia's pretty, childlike warmth, and was politely cordial to Frank and Kitty. Her manner was at once quietly assured and quietly unassuming, although on her entrance her eyes had seemed furtively observant, as one who found herself among strange, if interesting, surroundings.

"I feel as if we might be Eskimos, by Jove!" Frank Fosdyke whispered with a secret gurgle to his wife, who responded only with an agonized "Hush!"

"This omelet is really delicious," said Mrs. Devereaux, kindly, in one of the pauses of the dinner. "I don't know that I have eaten one as good since I left Paris. May I ask if you have a woman or a man cook?"

"We have a man in the kitchen," said Marcia, unblushingly, Kersley being out there at the moment. "He has lived in Paris."

"Oh, the touch was unmistakable!"

said Mrs. Devereaux. She turned graciously to Kitty. "I take a great interest in small establishments; my niece, Angela Homestead, is about to marry in moderate circumstances. Unlike many women in society, I have always looked after my own household. When I am at home the servants report to me for half an hour every morning to receive their orders for the day. So when Angela naturally came to me for advice, I said to her: 'Above all things, Angela, remember that a good cook is always worth what you pay for him.' The health of the family is so largely dependent on the food. With a French cook, a butler, a laundress and three maids, a simple establishment for two people can be kept up decently and in order; a retinue of servants is not necessary when you do not entertain. Of course, with less than three maids it is impossible to be clean."

"No, indeed," said Kitty.

"I should think not," assented Mr. Fosdyke, with unnecessary ardor.

"It is pleasant to have you agree with me," said Mrs. Devereaux, politely. "But, speaking of Paris, oddly enough, since we've been sitting here I have been reminded forcibly, though I can't imagine why, of a young man whom I met there a couple of times over a year ago—a tall, blond young artist who won a prize at the Salon. I haven't heard of him since, though he seemed to have rather unusual talent. I believe he left for New York. I can't recall his name, but perhaps you can help me to it. He painted children very fetchingly."

"Was it Kersley Battersby?" asked Marcia, with a swift frown at the owner of the name, who had doubled over suddenly.

"Kersley Battersby. The very man!" exclaimed Mrs. Devereaux, with animation. "How clever you are, my dear, to guess it! My sister, the Countess of Crayford, who has just come over this autumn, wants some one to paint her twin girls. It strikes me that he would be the very person to do it, if possibly you have his address. There was a sentiment, a bloom, one might call it,

that seemed to characterize his children's heads particularly. They made a real impression on me."

"Yes, Battersby has a great deal of bloom," said Mr. Fosdyke, solemnly. "Bloom is what he excels in. Alphonse, fill Mrs. Devereaux's glass. I will look up his address in my notebook, Mrs. Devereaux. I have an impression that he is within reach."

He turned to Marcia provocatively, but she did not respond. Her brain was suddenly in a whirl that carried her past the wild incongruities of the situation. If Kersley had "prospects" like that— She did not dare to meet his eyes.

The dinner was excellent, the waiting perfect. Marcia was in a glow of happiness. She felt repaid for her work, her struggles, and the expenditure which would make a new gown this winter impossible. This was as she had wanted it to be—a little Thanksgiving feast for this woman who was her friend. Through all Mrs. Devereaux's interest in the others, the little inner bond was between her and Marcia. It did not matter that Ellen had stumped upstairs after the last cup of coffee, leaving Kersley to clear the table, or that the babies might wake up and cry. Nothing mattered when she knew that dear Mrs. Devereaux was pleased. She said to herself that this was what gave her such a strangely exhilarated feeling; and yet— When it was time for the guest to depart, and Marcia came from upstairs bringing Mrs. Devereaux's fur cloak, that lady and Kitty both looked smilingly at the girl from the midst of a conversation.

"Must you go so soon?" pleaded Marcia.

"Yes, the carriage is waiting," said Mrs. Devereaux. "I am under the doctor's orders, you remember, my dear. I've had a charming Thanksgiving; you don't know how much I appreciate Mrs. Fosdyke's letting me spend it here. And one thing has appealed to me particularly, if you won't mind my saying it: I am more complimented, more touched, by being made one of your little family circle, with-

out any alteration in your usual mode of living, than by any amount of the ceremony which is often so foolishly considered necessary—a man behind each chair, masses of orchids, and expensive menus." She smiled warmly at Marcia, and added: "It is to you that I really owe my introduction into this charmingly domestic household. Your sister, however, has made me partner to a little secret, in response to my inquiries; she says that you are about to be engaged to the very Mr. Battersby of whom we were speaking, and whose address she has given me, so that I may make arrangements at once for my nieces' portraits. She tells me that he has excellent prospects."

"Oh!" murmured Marcia, in sudden crimson embarrassment. She could actually feel Kersley's triumphant smile behind the dining-room portières.

"And as I am about to start on the Egyptian tour that will take me away for a year, I want to know if I may take advantage of having been made one of the family and ask you to make use of my cottage at Ardsley for the honeymoon—which I hope may last until my return, if Mr. Battersby's commissions don't call him away before. I will have my people put it at your disposal."

"Dear, dear Mrs. Devereaux!" cried Marcia. If something odd in the beating of her heart made her feel her further speech to be foolishly incoherent, it was, perhaps, not unattractively so to her smiling elders.

She did not hear Mr. Fosdyke's exclamation as the lights of Mrs. Devereaux's carriage disappeared from view: "Of all the Arabian Nights' entertainments! Who am I, anyway?"

She had been drawn into the dining room with Kersley's outstretched arms closing around her firmly as she mechanically but ineffectually strove to retreat, his blue eyes beaming down on her as he whispered:

"Oh, Marcia, Marcia! This comes of trying to show gratitude to strangers. *'About to be engaged'*! Accepting a honeymoon cottage before you'd accepted the man!"

THE WARRENNERS

CHAPTER X.



MCALLISTER did not come to Grand Street, but Gertrude had not renounced hope when a note brought by hand found Mr. and Mrs. Warrenner at dinner over an Irish stew and canned tomatoes.

Gertrude broke the seal of the heavy paper.

"See here, George, from Mrs. Bellamy!" and she read aloud:

"MY DEAR MRS. WARRENER: Won't you and your husband dine with us on Sunday night, quite informally, at eight o'clock? I was so sorry to find you out when I called.
"Sincerely, AGNES BELLAMY."

George whistled.

"Gracious, Gert, you *are* getting up in the world!"

This offended her; said, too, before Katy.

She laid the letter indifferently down by her plate and went on with her dinner. After a moment she said:

"I guess I won't go."

George stared and then laughed.

"Go! Why, you'd break your neck to! There isn't another soul in Slocum the Bellamys have asked to dinner, you can bet on that."

She frowned and tried to catch his eye, but he went on: "It's a mighty good thing for me and my business. Bellamy's thick with Mr. Fulsome; he was in the office the other day, and I came near meeting him. 'Eight o'clock,'" he quoted. "That's the swell dinner hour, and I guess we'll be hungry enough by then."

She could have choked him. Her pretty face was distorted with anger. As Katy passed the custard and she refused it, she said:

"You can go, Katy; I'll ring if I want anything." And the maid was hardly out of hearing when she burst forth in a low tone:

"I never heard anything like the way

you talk before that girl! She'll think it's the first time anyone ever noticed us at all. You're perfectly awful, George!"

"Oh, she didn't hear anything, Gert," he consoled. "I wasn't saying anything bad. Don't look so mad."

"Mad!" Her cheeks were hot. "You make me crazy."

He said, soothingly, to change her point of view:

"What are you going to wear?"

"I'm not going."

Warrenner dropped his spoon.

"Oh, say! You're not going to stay at home for a little thing like this?"

"I haven't got anything to wear."

Before this argument the wise man is silent. But George ventured:

"What's the matter with some of your card-party dresses?"

"Oh, my gracious!" The contraction was so sharp in her voice that it sounded like a sob. "Do you think I'd wear any of my old Slocum dress-maker clothes up to the Bellamys' dinner party?"

"It isn't a dinner party; they said 'informally.'"

"They're formal enough by themselves for me. I'm not going."

Warrenner got up from the table, lit a tobacco cigarette, shook the match, put it down on the custard saucer, puffed out a few whiffs of his coarse weed, then said:

"What's the matter with getting a new dress?"

His wife controlled her joy, and her voice was more gentle.

"Well, I guess you couldn't afford it, the girls' wages are so high, anyhow."

Warrenner, his hands in his pockets, began to walk up and down the room. No, he couldn't afford it; not even the advantage to his business of Mr. Bel-

lamy's acquaintance would have led him to incur a new expense at this moment. It was a hard time of the year. But one sight of a cloud on the pretty face at the other end of the table, the drooping mouth—

Determined to have it all out at once, Gertrude capitulated.

"There'll be the hack there and back—three or four dollars."

"Oh, that's not much"—Warrener felt like a prince. "What will the dress cost?"

"I guess I'd better not go, George. Nobody in Slocum could make me a good enough dress."

"No?" he said, laughing. "Well, you are tony! Get it in New York, then."

She was elated beyond her power to conceal. One of those women who never let the man who loves them see his full measure of power to confer favors or give pleasure, she got up and went out of the room with no answer. And Warrener waited, expecting to hear her call down to him from upstairs. Finally he went out into the hall.

"Aren't you coming back down here?"

"Oh, come on up," she answered, briskly. "I'm looking for a New York dressmaker's address. One of the ladies in the bridge club gave it to me."

CHAPTER XI.

On the night of the Bellamys' dinner, as the Warreners drove up from Grand Street to the hill in a hired hack, George essayed a few pleasantries about "the swell occasion," but, not encouraged, followed his wife's example and sat silently back in the carriage, enjoying the first edge of the "speer," as he called it.

He repeated for the third time: "Mr. Bellamy was in the office the other day. I came near meeting him." And this circumstance appeared in Warrener's eyes to establish a sort of familiarity already between himself and his host.

Gertrude, in her corner, excited and rather frightened, said nothing. Her

brain was trying to take hold of some thought strong enough, steady enough, to balance it. Her dress, her timidity before Mrs. Bellamy, her hope that George would be "easy," curiosity and expectation, struggled together for supremacy across the little mirror of her mind, and back of all the figure of Mr. McAllister, tall and dark, overshadowed the whole.

As the stale smells of livery carriage, ill-kept horses, dirty harness, damp blankets, wafted to her nostrils and settled on her clothes and into her hair, she said:

"I do wish I'd got a little perfume of some kind or other! But I didn't know what to choose."

After a short drive of some fifteen or twenty minutes the McAllister house appeared around the curve of the road, set high above Slocum on the hill; and no child at a first party, no débutante behind her bouquet, was ever more tremulous than Gertrude Warrener when the carriage stopped and her husband helped her out at the Bellamys' door.

They were distinctly on time; the clock in the drawing room, where they were shown after leaving their wraps, stood at ten to eight. Mr. Warrener regarded his wife as she appeared against the background of the room's beautiful objects, the shaded lamplight falling around her. Either her fitness or her incongruity for the first time made him self-conscious. He had stolidly refused to add to his wardrobe any luxury or novelty—he "went as he was," so he expressed it—but in a nervous whisper he asked her:

"Say, do I look all right?"

Before she had time to reassure him, Mr. Bellamy came breezily in.

"Ah, Mrs. Warrener! How de do, Warrener? Glad to see you. This is neighborly and nice of you, I am sure! My wife's been in town to-day for the first time, and it's rather tired her. It's *such* work getting the automobile around the streets, isn't it? Do you automobile a great deal? No? Well, New York's a great place—a great place. I've stayed away so long from

it that I feel as if I haven't a right to any of the big, stupendous doings that have been going on without me, you know."

Bellamy looked good-naturedly from the lovely woman to the ordinary husband, whose smiling air was a little too obsequious, a little too affable.

"Speaking of big things," cleverly introduced Mr. Bellamy, "I've been hearing something about these N. E. Wisconsin Oil Fields, Warrenner. I believe you're just the man to give me all the information I want."

Gertrude saw her husband fall into a semblance of perfect ease, and if not, strictly speaking, to the manner born, he was neither *gauche* nor shy. He seemed to talk well, in his hard, rather loud voice, about things she could not understand. She glanced around at the various objects in the room, but she could not take them in; they were Greek characters to her unlettered taste. The mass of things was bewildering to her, and she was beginning to be restless when Mrs. Bellamy floated in like a white ship and received her guests. Dinner was immediately announced.

As they went in without waiting, Gertrude took it for granted that Mr. McAllister was not to be one of the party, and the keen disappointment that followed caused his figure to assume at length the place he had been forcing for himself in her thoughts; as they took their places about the round table, Mrs. Bellamy said:

"We never wait for my brother; he is a very tardy person. Ah, here you are, Paul. There's your chair, next to Mrs. Warrenner."

Small as the table was, the conversation was not general. Bellamy kept Warrenner talking—filling his sails, pushing him along with breezy interest. Mrs. Bellamy, who had made a complete change in her costume since her maid brought word that Mrs. Warrenner was in evening dress, was not in the best of humors. Having submitted to her brother's entertainment of "those stupid, common people," her attitude was bored and critical, and, after a few remarks to Mrs. Warrenner, answered by

that dazzled lady in monosyllables, the hostess devoted herself to a very good dinner and to a half-amused, half-irritated study of her brother and the guests.

She regarded her brother's affairs with mingled feelings: disapproval—for they were nearly always of the character a woman of Agnes Bellamy's cold, severe *morale* must discountenance—and a sort of indulgent pride in his easy conquests, his charm and his power over women. She had on more than one occasion been the confidante, unwilling and secretly scornful, of unhappy women who suffered for Paul's pleasure. She had lectured him, advised him, argued with him, more than once. His fondness for her sex she called weakness, and in spite of her adoration had suffered at what she believed to be cruelty in his attitude toward women.

"He talks to her as if he had known her all his life," she mused, as she watched him lean toward Mrs. Warrenner; and it was this perfectly well-bred familiarity that was making the pretty woman comfortable and happy as she did not know she could be at the Bellamys' table.

McAllister treated her with the friendliness of an old acquaintance, and with something more—a tender deference.

He bore the burden of entertainment lightly—told her amusing little incidents, appealing to her as if her wit were the keenest, asking her sympathy as if her understanding were the most profound.

"You eat nothing at all," he reproached her at length.

"Yes, I do—but I am not hungry."

"You'll offend my sister mortally—or, to be truthful, offend me, for I ordered the dinner myself; just what I thought you would like."

Mrs. Bellamy heard this and smiled as she answered a question put to her by her husband. She felt certain Mrs. Warrenner tasted for the first *mousse de foie-gras*.

"Fill Mrs. Warrenner's glass." As she demurred, he urged: "Do, please;

it's a very dry champagne—perhaps too dry."

Bellamy said: "I want to propose the health of your husband's new interest, Mrs. Warren—*the N. E. Wisconsin Oil Fields.*"

Mrs. Bellamy asked, when the toast had been drunk: "Do you understand your husband's affairs? Have you a business instinct, Mrs. Warren?"

Her husband's affairs! Gertrude could quite grasp the fact of George's salary, and of its insufficiency to meet her desires. She knew just what she had to spend a week, and that if she went over the sum it meant debt and difficulties. She had never heard of northeast Wisconsin. But she said:

"I don't take much interest in business."

Her husband contradicted her, heartily. "Why, she's a first-class little business woman! She keeps her accounts to a penny, Mrs. Bellamy; and I guess she could understand all I have to handle if I told her about it, but I get enough of business at the office, and I leave it there when I come home."

It had been prearranged that the continental rule should be followed, and the ladies not be left alone *tête-à-tête* in the drawing room after dinner while the men smoked.

Bellamy brought out his choice cigars. It appealed to his good nature to heap attentions on Harkweather & Fulsome's clerk, and to give him the best his house afforded. "I've seen your name on the Golf Club directory."

"Yes," said Warren; "my name's there, but I never go up."

"You must take a Saturday off and have a round of holes with me."

With the coffee were passed cigarettes to the ladies; Mrs. Bellamy took one, lit it and said to her guest:

"Do you smoke?"

"I never have." She was a little shocked.

"Don't, Gertie," her husband warned; "it will make you sick."

With a timid hope of touching upon a congenial topic with her hostess, whose attitude of cool indifference, al-

though polite, was so distant that Gertrude felt chilled, she said:

"I hope your little girl isn't ill. She's such a cute little thing. I noticed she wasn't at dinner."

"*Fanny at dinner!*" her mother exclaimed, in spite of herself. "Why, she has supper at five. She's in bed at six! She should be asleep now—if you will excuse me, I will go and see her a few minutes—she was restless to-night."

Mrs. Warren saw her leave the room with relief, conscious that she had not advanced in her eyes. She smiled with pleasure when McAllister asked:

"Won't you come and let me show you some Italian photographs, Mrs. Warren? I have quite a lot of them."

She followed him into the library, where she had seen him first. He installed her in a large chair under a lamp, put the book on a little table before her and opened the portfolio. The first was the photograph of the Generalissimo Gardens in Spain—a gray print. As the charm of the scene disclosed itself McAllister watched her curiously to see what the esthetic effect would be.

"Have you been there?" she asked.

"I lived in Granada for a year—I was painting some pictures."

"Did you paint this place?"

"No, I only paint portraits." Too amused at her personal interest to know that he was disappointed at her vacuity, he said: "I should like awfully to paint you."

She made no reply and turned over another of the photographs.

But McAllister, seeing that they meant nothing to her, took them from her hand. "Why do we bother with these stupid pictures?" he said, impatiently. "It's much better to talk, don't you think so?"

"Why, I thought the photographs were pretty," Mrs. Warren tardily complimented.

"I suppose you haven't time to be painted—to pose?"

"Oh, I don't know." She hesitated. "I never have anything to do."

"She isn't vain," he decided, "or conscious of her good looks. It doesn't

even please her for me to want to paint her." He said, hypocritically:

"No doubt you've been painted already."

Mrs. Warrener started with surprise and laughed: "Well, I guess not. I haven't even had my picture taken since I was married."

McAllister tied up the portfolio and lighted a fresh cigarette, and then said, smiling, and looking at her intently: "I believe you have no idea how pretty you are—how lovely you are."

He saw her color like a young girl; then she said with a burst of frankness, as if she thought he could understand her and she did not mind his knowing:

"If you had seen me making up my mind to wear this dress to-night, and fixing my hair over five or six times, I guess you'd think I cared how I look!"

McAllister said: "Why, that's a charming dress!"

For the first her eyes darted a hostile look at him.

"It's awful!" she exclaimed. "Beside Mrs. Bellamy's, it's just too common for anything!"

It was indeed. Beside Mrs. Bellamy's Parisian creation, with its skirt like a flower bell and its bodice like a calyx, this timid *décolleté*, which had seemed so immodest to George and herself in their room, was unmistakably provincial. But it fitted her. It was not easy to fail with the round, soft figure; even an indifferent dress-maker would find it hard to spoil Mrs. Warrener's *taille*.

McAllister thought so—his eyes said so. He studied her critically, and she felt his look and its too great insistence; she grew uncomfortable.

"If it doesn't really please you, let me design a dress for you—I'm a painter, you know, and I have all sorts of ideas about clothes. I'll make a drawing and fetch it down to you some one of these days when you've nothing to do."

She could neither refuse nor accept. She heard her husband's voice and the host's approaching—she heard Mrs. Bellamy's, too. For a second she sat

still, looking up at Mr. McAllister, whose eyes held hers, penetrated them; a sharp fire that was not all pain went through her body. Then she made herself free with an effort, and rose, as the others came in from the library.

CHAPTER XII.

The livery hack waited for the guests in a patch of moonlight. The scrawny horses, under cover of their blankets, appeared to be asleep, as certainly was the driver, curled up on his seat. When roused he crawled heavily down to free his beasts, drowsiness and fatigue in the very droop of his body and his lagging movements.

He hurried none too slowly for Gertrude Warrener, for whom the open door of the lighted house, cutting a lemon-colored square into the moonshine, formed an arch into an impossible and deeply envied world, whose occupants were still before her, surrounded by splendor and a cloud of intoxicating perfume.

She leaned forward on her seat in the carriage, her eyes fastened on the open door. Her cloak with a mangy fur collar, the unique garment in her possession bearing resemblance to an evening wrap, fell over her shoulders and a little back, leaving her throat bare. She had arranged, not unskillfully, a bit of white veiling on her head, and as it drooped over her forehead and her eyes, and she leaned forward with parted lips, she suggested the *Greuze laitière* more than ever.

The driver was up, and George got into the carriage and shut the door. The good wines had greatly enlivened Mr. Warrener, and his most convivial self had been aroused this evening. He began at once to talk. His companion vaguely heard him eulogize Mr. Bellamy's friendliness, the value of his acquaintance in the business world, Mrs. Bellamy's elegance, and the dinner—which last he discussed in detail, from the *hors-d'œuvre*, which he designated as "dinky little doings," to the coffee and cigars.

"I never ate in any restaurant that

came up with it, or at any public dinner either. Half the time I didn't know what I was eating. Did you?"

She had not, but for reasons different from her husband's.

Warrener calculated that the dinner must have cost five dollars a head.

"That's always what you allow when you go in for any kind of a swell meal, outside of the wines. But it isn't the price that cuts any ice with Bellamy; he must have close to a hundred thousand a year."

"Is Mr. McAllister rich?"

This was the first remark with which the woman broke her silence.

"You bet! He's rich enough to do nothing, and hang around and dress like a Dago."

This description was so far from being Mrs. Warrener's opinion, her quicker sense and keener perception having recognized McAllister's distinction, that it did not even offend her. Her short upper lip curled a little in the dark.

"I guess they must have opened three quarts of champagne. You don't feel it any, Gert, do you?"

Perhaps she was feeling it; perhaps it was the champagne that held her nerves so tight in tension that it seemed as if they would sever at a word, or a touch, or if George should come too near her.

When in her room she laid aside her things; her gloves and veil had retained the odor of the Bellamys', the mingled fragrance of rare cigars, of flowers and wine—above all, the kind of cigarettes McAllister smoked predominated. It intoxicated her remembrance. As she took her hair down it smelt as if it were full of smoke.

George half suggested:

"I guess it won't do to ask the Bellamys here."

The entertainment had roused in him kindly, good-natured enjoyment. He felt friendly and honored; no shade of envy marred his pleasant recollections of the feast.

"We couldn't get up any kind of a dinner, could we, Gerty?"

His wife cast a look of scorn at him.

"Oh, yes, without any dishes, or silver, or anything, or napkins fit to be seen! Why, we're like *beggars* to them! Don't you know it? I don't ever want to see Mrs. Bellamy again!"

"Why, Gert!" Warrener was as much grieved as his still high spirits could permit.

"She despises us. I could see that. She thinks we're common."

The dress which had dazzled her when it came from New York fell at her feet. She could have trampled on it.

She could not analyze her feelings. She thought she was angry at Mrs. Bellamy and with George.

"Well!" he ejaculated, helplessly. "And I thought you had a pleasant time!"

He wondered if she disliked them all—Mr. McAllister, too, with whom she had talked and laughed. He didn't like to continue the subject.

She let her hair stay unbraided, loose about her face, and when she was in bed it lay between her pillow and her hot cheek. The fragrance of the other house clung to it; it was a sort of narcotic to her restless sleep.

CHAPTER XIII.

As McAllister went out of the door with the Warreners, Bellamy, by his wife's expression perfectly informed of her thoughts, said to her, quickly:

"Don't say anything to Paul about his guests, Agnes. You see, he has a fancy for the woman."

She shrugged her annoyance, and before she could reply her brother came back into the room.

"Well," said Bellamy, "did I do my duty by your friends?"

"You were delightful," replied McAllister, gratefully; "you were *impayable*. It was a pleasure to watch you."

John Bellamy's large-featured and genial face sobered as he disclaimed:

"Not at all! I was serious. I don't ask people to my house and make sport of them. That's a steady-going, decent

fellow, with some education and a keen business sense; he's stuffed full of information—he's like a ticker, mechanically giving out accurate figures. You could trust him, I'll swear. Now, if I were inclined to go into the Street again, you know, I'd attach Warrener to me."

"I hope," said his wife, "that you won't do anything of the kind."

"I may, my dear; I couldn't stay on here in this whirlpool and not spin about in it, too. I'm not a farmer, nor a painter. I'm an active man, and I'm actually itching to go back on the Exchange."

The younger man had thrown himself into a chair, his long body indolently extended. He regarded the agitated figure of his portly brother-in-law with indulgent affection.

"You're a brick," he said, heartily, "and I wish I were like you. Now, on the contrary, I don't want to budge from the place where I seem to have dropped like a fruit that has hung up in the sun too long and falls at last. I don't want to stir. I shall begin to paint here—fix some room up for a studio and vegetate."

The sister looked up at him sharply.

"If you're really going to paint again, Paul, you might go on with that study of Fanny."

He replied without enthusiasm that he might.

"There won't be any chance of portraits here, unless some one comes out from New York to stay with us. And that," she finished, more cheerfully, "is an idea. I must have some people out."

But her brother, half springing up, said, decidedly:

"No, no, Agnes. If there are any house parties on the *tapis*, I shall go away. If little Mrs. Warrener will pose for me, I am going to paint her."

As Mrs. Bellamy started to speak, her husband frowned at her, shook his head, and broke in himself:

"I quite understand that. She's a deucedly pretty little woman."

So many retorts and criticisms were on Mrs. Bellamy's tongue that she wisely

refrained from saying anything at all; but her brother knew her thoughts, for he read her silence, and smiled to himself:

"She finds poor Mrs. Warrener insupportable, and she won't be bored with her."

He neither expected that she should nor cared. He did not look for one woman to appreciate the charm and fascination there is for a man in a particular type of her own sex. After he had been left alone by the Bellamys he pushed his hand up through his hair as if he would brush away some too persistent idea. Finally he took a book and, drawing near to him the matches and a box of cigarettes, read and smoked himself into a mood for retiring.

CHAPTER XIV.

Mr. Warrener breakfasted alone the next morning; his wife, on the plea of a headache which he attributed to the excitement of the previous night and the wine, kept her bed until after he was gone to New York.

When, later in the day, she listlessly came downstairs, it was as if a butterfly should return to the chrysalis to see it lie a dusty, degraded shell. This was the effect her modest home produced on her who for a short time had shaken her wings in the blue.

As it was long past the marketing hour and she did not feel like stirring, she telephoned her orders to the different shopkeepers.

"Pound and a half of dried codfish, yes, ma'am. Three of corned beef, Miss Warrener? That all? All right!"

The brisk business tones assailed her ear with their repetition of vulgar edibles which she mentally ranged alongside dishes lightly tasted of but once in her life. She left the telephone with an irritation which overcame her lassitude. She wouldn't think about those folks any more. She was just as good as they were. Old McAllister started life in a store. She had heard her uncle-in-law say so. Nothing could change George's bank account and her own life, and she would just forget the people on

the hill—put them out of her mind. Mrs. Bellamy was awfully proud; and Mr. McAllister was a flirt. She would think of something else. With these resolves she compressed her lips, settled her belt around her waist with decision, and turned to choose whether she should go and see Miss Whistler or sit upstairs and do some mending, when a ring at the instrument by which she still stood made her spring toward it. As she took up the receiver she was sure she would hear McAllister's voice at the other end; her heart beat like a trip hammer.

"Say, Mrs. Warrener!"

Her countenance changed.

"It's Mary Turnbull. Can't you come up to lunch? Two or three ladies are coming. We'll have a little bridge afterward."

The crisp, monotonous voice, hardly distinguishable from the grocer's, summoned Mrs. Warrener back to her own sphere, and, as it proved, to a welcome change of ideas.

She caught at the invitation eagerly.

"Why, yes, I'll come right up."

She went with feverish haste to get ready.

This time Mrs. Turnbull's door was reached and rung at. As Mrs. Warrener went in she remembered that McAllister had called it "a box of a place." It was little more, in fact. Dining room, parlor and library on one floor, filled with articles—for they could not be called ornaments—of no value and with no *raison d'être*, from cherished Christmas cards on painted easels to gilded walnuts tied with ribbons, swinging from the center chandelier. All was neatness and precision itself, breathing Fourteenth Street bargain counters and small means. The house, although larger and more furnished than Gertrude's, was of the same character. She had always thought Mrs. Turnbull's parlor "real pretty," and today as she entered she resolutely discarded any comparison with more lately admired interiors.

Mrs. Turnbull, a member of the non-descript American class, neither high nor low, and scorning the middle, was

as "good as anybody" and better than many another of her sex whose name emblazoned in the society columns was less well connected than her own. Her husband filled a position in a shipping company. Just what he shipped or brought to port Gertrude ignored, but she had an idea that if ever she and George could go off on a steamer Mr. Turnbull would get them reduced rates.

Mary Turnbull kissed Gertrude warmly.

"They're all here! When you rang I thought it must be the ice cream. It's late, but we'll sit down, and it'll come along before we're done eating."

In the dining room, just large enough to permit a skillful servant to squeeze between chair and sideboard as she made the rounds of the table, some four or five ladies had gathered to share Mrs. Turnbull's hospitality; women so much of the same mold and cast and type, with such slight difference of dress and manner, that one might fancy Slocum had cut them out with giant scissors, like paper dolls, all of one piece and on one line.

Of them Mrs. Warrener was not. Even her shirt-waist, because of the figure under it, had a personal air. Her collar and stock, because of the neck they circled, were individual, and the face, petulant and discontented when she was off her guard—otherwise indifferent and piquant—was very unlike the honest commonplaceness around her.

"Say, Gerty Warrener"—her hostess bent her bright eyes on the guest and significantly tapped her own collar—"bought or home-made?"

"I made it last summer when we were at Cape Green. I can give you the pattern."

The conversation thus femininely opened turned on collars and cuffs and embroideries for fully five minutes, during which time Mrs. Turnbull's fried oysters were appreciated and complimented.

"Fried every one of them with my own hands"—she smiled, calmly—"and not ashamed to play cards with you ladies afterward, either."

She held out her hands in proof.

Some one asked Gertrude:

"Why didn't you come last Thursday? I saw you turning up Elm Street, and I thought surely you were coming to the club."

"Yes," nodded Mrs. Turnbull; "and I saw you go right past my door with a gentleman. What do you think of that? I was never so surprised in my life."

Mrs. Warrener did not appear embarrassed; she ate an olive daintily and put the pit down.

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Gertrude, who had come out to escape the McAllisters, had no intention that they should follow her here. She did not refer to the dinner, for she dreaded the hail of questions the aroused curiosity would put. So, before the topic could be further pursued, she asked for the biscuit and fried oyster recipes, and by the time her culinary interest was satisfied, the conversation, led by Mrs. Westervelt, the Browning enthusiast, had turned upon the books she was reading for the library.

Mrs. Peter Westervelt was the town sieve through which all proposed literature passed before being admitted to the library and offered to the general taste.

"I think it's a real bad book," she said, in her harsh, staccato nasal. "I shan't let it pass me."

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Mrs. Westervelt complied, and went on:

"And he forgives her and takes her off to travel."

Mrs. Turnbull exclaimed:

"Why, I think that's a moral story!"

There was a chorus of:

"Mary Turnbull!"

"Yes, I do. Dr. Saunders in church last Sunday said nobody had any idea what they're going to do until they're tempted. And I guess if more women up and told their husbands everything, there'd be fewer divorces."

"Most women do tell their husbands everything," said the doctor's wife, whose husband was home so seldom that she made good her time. "I think such cases are real rare. Of course, the papers are full of them, and books, and the theater, but you don't hear much scandal in a place like Slocum, for instance. I don't believe I ever heard one."

She glanced about her for confirmation and met the eyes of the simple-minded, loyal wives before her. Mrs. Warrener's was the last face she met. Gertrude did not often speak at any social gathering; she smiled and looked pretty. Now she said:

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There was a shocked pause. Mrs. Westervelt indulgently explained to this inferior intellect:

"You see, she hadn't a right to care for anybody else."

the hill—put them out of her mind. Mrs. Bellamy was awfully proud; and Mr. McAllister was a flirt. She would think of something else. With these resolves she compressed her lips, settled her belt around her waist with decision, and turned to choose whether she should go and see Miss Whistler or sit upstairs and do some mending, when a ring at the instrument by which she still stood made her spring toward it. As she took up the receiver she was sure she would hear McAllister's voice at the other end; her heart beat like a trip hammer.

"Say, Mrs. Warrener!"

Her countenance changed.

"It's Mary Turnbull. Can't you come up to lunch? Two or three ladies are coming. We'll have a little bridge afterward."

The crisp, monotonous voice, hardly distinguishable from the grocer's, summoned Mrs. Warrener back to her own sphere, and, as it proved, to a welcome change of ideas.

She caught at the invitation eagerly.

"Why, yes, I'll come right up."

She went with feverish haste to get ready.

This time Mrs. Turnbull's door was reached and rung at. As Mrs. Warrener went in she remembered that McAllister had called it "a box of a place." It was little more, in fact. Dining room, parlor and library on one floor, filled with articles—for they could not be called ornaments—of no value and with no *raison d'être*, from cherished Christmas cards on painted easels to gilded walnuts tied with ribbons, swinging from the center chandelier. All was neatness and precision itself, breathing Fourteenth Street bargain counters and small means. The house, although larger and more furnished than Gertrude's, was of the same character. She had always thought Mrs. Turnbull's parlor "real pretty," and today as she entered she resolutely discarded any comparison with more lately admired interiors.

Mrs. Turnbull, a member of the non-descript American class, neither high nor low, and scorning the middle, was

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With gentle obstinacy Mrs. Warrener finished her argument.

"It couldn't do any good to tell her husband. It would only make him feel badly. She couldn't care for him, anyway."

There was no one present to discuss the moral and esoteric problem which made them all rather uncomfortable.

"Don't you put that book in the library, Mrs. Westervelt," said the doctor's wife, emphatically. "Gertrude Warrener'd get it right out."

"I guess I've read it already," Gertrude replied. "George brought it home a few weeks ago."

Bridge followed. The stakes were a box of candy-kitchen chocolates, and the lady of the house, with Mrs. Warrener for partner, making the highest score, the hostess insisted that Gertrude should take the entire box.

As she walked home, her box of chocolates under her arm, her recipes in her glove, she was more nearly peaceful than she had been for weeks. The previous night's excitement had died away, and she felt "good," as she expressed it, and very glad she had gone to Mrs. Turnbull's. She did not know that she was indebted for the capacity to enjoy even what there had been in this simple pleasure to the experience of the past few weeks.

"When George comes home to-night I'll be nicer. I've been horrid lately, and he was so good about that dress."

But George telephoned that he was kept in town so late that he would stay the night. There was a deal on with a Western company. The following day he sent for a valise of his things; he might have to run as far as Central Town, Wisconsin. As he bade his wife good-by over the telephone, he said:

"You see, I'm indispensable!"

And the note of pride in his voice rang even pitifully to her, for she knew how hard he worked and for how small a return.

"He won't be back, then, for four or five days," she thought. "What shall I ever do with myself?"

CHAPTER XV.

The next few days Gertrude found herself restless and inexpressibly bored. She had done her duty in going to Mrs. Turnbull's, and now gave herself liberty and half reluctantly and half triumphantly let herself remember the man she had seen for but a few times in her life. The second in the library when he had looked at her so intently was what she liked best to recall, what she had tried to escape with whatever honest sincerity she possessed.

She again picked up the book they had spoken of at lunch and re-read it at certain portions, substituting McAllister's name for the man's, and her own for the woman's. When the scene occurred when the wife appeals to her husband, Gertrude's lip curled.

By the third day of her husband's absence she was ill with *ennui*, and awoke with a terrible headache and pain in her limbs. She stayed in bed all day, and toward five o'clock dressed and went out and walked slowly down the Tentanus Road, feeling very weak and wretched and yet unable "to stand another minute of the house." When she had left the town for some quarter of a mile—fields and scraggy woods on each side of her—she heard the hum of a motor and the puffing of its near approach. There were several in Slo-cum, but she thought only of one. At the sound, obeying an impulse of her whole physical being, she stopped where she was and turned toward it. It slowed, ran up to her side and stood shaking. Mr. McAllister got out, lifted his hat to her and asked, with concern:

"Why, Mrs. Warrener, you're really ill?"

She had, indeed, grown white, her lips pinched, her eyes terrified as they met his.

"I must have frightened you. I'm so sorry."

He took her hand. Her lips quivered.

"No, I don't know. I guess you must have scared me, coming along so suddenly; I haven't been very well."

He exclaimed, sympathetically:

"You look dreadfully. What have you been doing?"

She shook her head.

"Nothing. There's never anything to do. I guess that's it."

"Yes," he comprehended; "that's just it. You're simply bored to death. You were going to walk and you're not strong enough. Let me take you for a little spin. I'll fetch you back safe."

She did not hesitate a moment. Her color came back, her face brightened with pleasure. She exclaimed with as much enthusiasm as she had ever put into her voice:

"I'd just love to go! I've never been in one."

McAllister helped her, covered her with a fur robe and tucked it around her, took his seat beside her.

"I'll bring you home in time for your husband's train," he said, as they started. And as the first wind started with them Gertrude said, briefly:

"He's away; he won't be home for a few days."

McAllister had his family mansion to himself that evening, and he was not sorry.

He had come in late. It was well after nine o'clock, and he wandered aimlessly into the library, and from thence to the wide porch inclosed with glass, at once a lounging room and a conservatory; he took a chair and sat smoking. He was not thinking of the woman with whom he had passed the last four hours as another man's wife, or as a human being weak and possibly easily led to contemplate acts by which her happiness would be menaced—but of her as a woman, as every man in the present tense of his passion thinks of the object.

His education was continental. For him women only existed as they could be courted, made love to, wooed and besieged. If he had been unscrupulous, he had certainly never met with great resistance, and his adventures after a little time disgusted and sickened him. The women themselves, unable to retain his respect or win his affection,

wearied him, and he had been unfaithful to more than one woman by whose infidelity he had profited.

He knew himself and his temperament too well to mistake his feelings for the pretty wife of the New York clerk. She was beginning to fill his thoughts; he was haunted and tantalized by her petulant beauty. Her undeveloped and naïve character he had not analyzed. "She is *une vraie amour-euse*," he decided, "and she has never had an emotion in her life." He paused in his reverie and smiled as he added: "Until now."

If anyone had told him—if his sister had ventured to insinuate—that he was planning to ruin this woman, he would have denied it. He saw no further than the moment, nothing more than the pleasure of seeing her, of revealing life to her, of, as he expressed it, "amusing her" and himself as well.

They had driven some thirty miles beyond Slocum before either of them had been aware of the hour. Then they had gone in and telephoned to her house that she would not return to dinner. And he had ordered for them an informal supper at a wayside hotel, much to her amusement and enjoyment.

As he sat smoking and musing, he smiled to recall her pleasure, her sparkling eyes and her laugh, more embarrassed than any other of the little signs of feminine coquetry she displayed to him. And how pretty she had grown as he talked to her, interested her and entertained her in this stuffy, primitive little dining room! His humor and his conversation had been of a very simple order, for he had seen that to please her it required slight effort, and that her experience and her comprehension of life and the world were as limited as a child's. What her mental qualities were, he did not ask nor care.

When they were in the motor on the homeward road, in the early moon-rising, he had driven his carriage as slowly as possible, leaned toward her, wrapped her in an extra coat of his own, and discreetly, in order not to frighten her, more like a boy at play with a little

bird he intends ultimately to set free, he made love to her all the way.

When she raised her face in the bright light to bid him good-by and thank him, it was so altered by the evening's pleasure from the discontented prettiness, that he recognized, with some compunction, how important the incident was in her narrow life.

Paul McAllister realized at the end of his reverie, when her illumined countenance remained with him as a last memory, how much things mean to a woman; and questioned whether, before this should mean so vastly more to her than it could ever mean to him, it were not better, infinitely better, to leave her.

He had brought out only one cigarette, and it had burned to the end. He threw it away and went into the house, moved hesitatingly toward the telephone, then put his hand on the bell and rang it.

"I don't believe she has gone to sleep or to bed."

He asked her number, and with a twinge of self-reproach and yet a certain eagerness, called her name when her voice responded at the other end.

"You're not asleep, then?"

"No."

"What are you doing?"

"Just sitting in the den."

He had no need to ask what she was thinking. He knew.

"I am coming to see you"—"now," was on his tongue, but he forced out—"to-morrow."

"I guess you'd better not."

"Why? Have you so many things to do?"

"No, but I guess I'll be out in the afternoon."

He could not plead through the telephone, and closed the conversation with a "good-night" and a promise to come at four and take his chance of finding her at home.

CHAPTER XVI.

Nothing in her wardrobe was fit to be seen, suitable or pleasing, when she started to prepare for McAllister's com-

ing by laying out her few dresses on the bed. Since her marriage no man had called on her alone, but her sentiments on this occasion were not those of a young girl at her first ball, but of an intensely excited woman. She said to herself that she was "scared."

The night had been sleepless; every hour of the drive to Pool Wood, of the dinner, her companion's half-caressing attentions, repeated themselves, and she gave herself no pains to check the memories that tantalized and stimulated her, until when she arose, early in the morning, her cheeks were as red as if she had fallen into a fever. Nor did her agitation over her toilet tranquilize her nerves. She could not bear her clothes! Nothing was good enough. She sighed and began to dress, choosing her prettiest shirt-waist and compromising on a dressy taffeta skirt. Thus habited, she was ready for her visitor an hour before the time.

She rearranged the parlor, dusting with an old handkerchief. She drew the curtains between the rooms, then closed them again, to gain the best effect; but the meager aspect of the place was unaltered by anything she could do.

"It's so little and poor. Of course he'll think it's a 'box.' I guess it's the smallest house he's ever called at."

Toward the hour she took a book and went upstairs to wait. The sound, as she thought, of an automobile made her start. But it was nothing but a pneumatic bicycle sagging past.

Then she began to listen. He might possibly be early—he would be if he cared very much about coming. His watch might be fast. She guessed their clocks were a little slow. Here in George's den the street sounds were indistinct, and she strained her ears for sounds that existed in her imagination only.

McAllister's watch was not fast.

Exactly at four she prepared to be ready to go down, her handkerchief in her hand, one or two furtive touches to her hair. Sure that he would come punctually at the hour, her nerve tension relaxed, only to tighten as the mo-

ments went by without any ring at the doorbell.

As she heard the front door open she sprang to her feet again. Nothing further developed. It was only Katy, who had gone out on the stoop.

Her mistress called her in, controlling her anger, and, reopening her book, tried to read. He wasn't coming, *that* was evident! She was too disappointed even to be angry, and for her own sake hastened to conjecture other excuses. He might have been out in his motor, and it had broken down; but there was the telephone! He would call her on it. She then began to dread to listen for its sharp summons. The only sound rewarding her attention was the clear striking of the Presbyterian church bell, as it marked five.

Tears of keen disappointment blurred the little pane of the window at Gertrude's side, through which she mistily saw the well-known objects of the back yard. Why should she care whether or not Mr. McAllister came at all? He hadn't meant anything right, anyhow. But this eminently proper argument drowned itself in the tears that now fell.

She exclaimed petulantly, aloud: "Goodness! I won't cry like a baby for him, and spoil my eyes!"

Just here across her excitement the ringing of the doorbell cut sharply. In a second the remembrance of her annoyance was gone, and she ran to the glass and before it wiped her eyes, which she thought showed no signs of tears; larger, more brilliant than usual, they sparkled back at her with the transformation of her mood.

Katy came up with Mr. McAllister's card.

After a few seconds Gertrude went slowly down to the parlor.

McAllister's temperament, not in the least philosophical, but that of the man of pleasure, the artist and good liver, had not led him to continue his train of self-examination. After a good night's sleep he cheerfully began his usual nonchalant existence, and, although the hour fixed for a *tête-à-tête* with a pretty woman in whose life he knew himself

to be an event was agreeably present in his mind all day, it had not caused him to hasten to his rendezvous.

In his long overcoat, a gardenia from his own hothouse in his buttonhole, he walked leisurely down the hill, in the crisp cold of the afternoon.

After the fresh air, when the sweet country odors had delighted his senses, the entrance into a close little house heavy with confined atmosphere of living and cooking gave him a momentary disgust. Finding himself in a diminutive room whose ceiling he could almost touch, he cast a hasty glance at the ghastly objects by which the woman he had come to see surrounded herself; he refused to look twice at them, but the banal coarseness, the poverty, indicated, instead of arousing his critical spirit, made him pity her.

He was prepared for a *gauche* reception on the part of an overdressed pretty woman, for an awkwardness it would be amusing to dispel; for the Gertrude Warrener who after a few minutes came slowly in, he was not prepared in the slightest degree.

Simply dressed, a change in her appearance which his masculine eye did not attribute to a new arrangement of her hair, she came forward, not a timid but a tremulous beauty, with splendidly flushed cheeks and brilliant eyes. The gaudy Turkish curtains fell behind her, and McAllister found himself face to face with an emotion he had mentally deferred, and had not expected to see so soon.

"Am I awfully late?" He took her hand. "I hope I haven't kept you waiting?"

She tried to speak, found it difficult, tried to smile, and gave that up. Then she faltered, brokenly:

"Oh! I thought you were not coming at all!"

"Not coming? Why, don't you know that I'd rather come than do anything else in the world?" He looked at her keenly. "Is it that that has made you cry?"

Gertrude shrugged, nodded, pushed him from her a little, turned her head

away. McAllister put his arms around her and kissed her.

CHAPTER XVII.

The visit for which she had waited, and which began dangerously, had been rudely broken in upon. Some one rang the doorbell, and into an atmosphere vibrant as an electric fluid, constrained and intense, Mary Turnbull was announced by Katy! She stayed until McAllister was forced to be the first to leave. After his departure Gertrude answered her visitor at random; absorbed in wondering if she and McAllister would ever be alone together again, whether his feelings would remain the same, if he would ever come again, and what would have happened if Mary had not appeared.

George's absence prolonged itself, and McAllister came to see her every day of that week. He conceived the idea of painting her, and made a charming little water color for which she posed, sitting in the vulgar, microscopic parlor on a plush sofa.

The rendezvous were eminently unsatisfactory for the man, and alone the fact that he was a sincere and talented artist, and the subject unusually paintable, made it possible for him to work at all. His temper helped him as well, for they were hardly ever alone for five minutes in succession.

But the entrance of Katy, telephone calls, tradespeople, messages, did not disturb the sitter. She was so flattered with the idea of having her portrait painted, and so enchanted to be the object of so much consideration and regard, that it put her in good humor with all the world, even with Katy, on whom she beamed with a friendliness which the Irish girl received contemptuously, as though she understood that her mistress' rare smiles were a sort of *pourboire* offered to her discretion.

McAllister was far from showing this good humor and patience. His annoyance and impatience grew with interruptions which destroyed the possibility of intimacy and imposed formal relations which he was impatient to change.

He had thought of this woman for too long to have their acquaintance end in the mild conventionality of a painting *séance*. His feelings were growing imperious. He was angry at her innocent coquetry, and attributed to her a cleverness she was far from possessing. He determined to bring his siege to a crisis.

As he mixed his colors he had the Greuze of the Louvre in his mind; he posed his subject as nearly as possible in the same position as the *laitière*. In painting her eyes, her softly turned cheeks, her petulant mouth, he seemed to caress them.

On the last afternoon of the week he told her that he should put his things together and send his man after them that evening. Mrs. Warrenner left her seat with a sigh of relief and came over to his side to inspect the portrait, whose progress she had followed with the pleasure of a child.

"Is it done? It's awfully cute. It looks just like a colored photograph."

She was perfectly delighted. He *must* think her pretty to paint her like that! McAllister frowned, his eyes were dark and angry, but not at her criticism, which was indifferent to him.

"No, it's not done, and I shan't finish it."

"Why, I think it looks all right. It's *much* nicer than I am. Anybody would say it flattered me."

Standing a little behind him, she criticised amiably, her face radiant with pleasure. McAllister reopened his box, dipped a brush, leaned forward and painted a little here and there.

The day was violently stormy. Over a thin layer of snow, the hail and rain were pouring and turning to ice as they fell. Against the gray, wet window-pane the drops of rain and globules of hail beat with a sharp, pattering sound. McAllister felt his blood beat and pulse with the storm. He shut his paint box, set down his brushes, turned to her, laid hold of both her arms, and held her like a vise, forcing her eyes to meet his. "How can I see you? This can't go on."

Her face flamed to the passion in his, his demand met her own desire. She

exclaimed, in a whisper: "Oh, look out, somebody's coming. It's Katy—I hear her voice."

But McAllister did not release her. "I won't let you go, not if all Slocum comes in, not unless you will promise me to come with me to New York to-day. You can take the three o'clock train, and I can meet you on it. *Promise me.*"

Her eyes, which he held determinedly, were humid, as were her parted lips. Her face was as eager and desirous as his own. As the steps of the maid were unmistakably coming toward the room, he released her abruptly, but he felt her yield then even as he set her free. She could make him no audible reply, for the maid came in with the recipe book in her hand—"the cook didn't know which sauce Mrs. Warren meant."

McAllister silently put up his painting paraphernalia and took his leave.

When he had gone, Gertrude, on the little sofa, the kitchen cook book open on her lap, turned its pages with fluttering fingers; her heart beat violently and her cheeks throbbed. "Roast tomatoes with green corn, peanut and grape fruit salad"—she could not find the sauce, and she dared not let herself speak lest her voice should be beyond her control. Katy said, contemptuously:

"I gave it to you marked! It's page 334. Is it the cream sauce or the wine sauce she's to make?"

It was to-day he had asked her to go—

She shut the book sharply and gave it back to the servant.

"Mr. Warrener won't be home till midnight. She needn't make any sauce. She needn't cook any dinner, either. I'm going to have supper out."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Warrener had found that he was not called upon to sacrifice his treasured bonds in order to pay the advanced wages of his servants. For several months he had taken an interest in the fortunes of a certain scheme—the pros-

pecting and opening up of oil fields in northeastern Wisconsin. He accepted a very small and insignificant position of trust in the new concern. The company organized and floated a certain amount of stock, and one afternoon, in the early part of the winter, Warrener sought his chiefs to ask their advice. Old Mr. Harkweather himself listened to the exposition of the interests in an insignificant concern which he had not considered worth his while to squeeze.

"Just where do these oil fields lie, Warrener?"

"In northeastern Wisconsin."

Mr. Harkweather had a map fetched, and with his glistening glasses a little down on his nose, his glinting eyes peering through them, he followed the lie of the prospect and oil fields as Warrener's stubby finger pointed them out.

"Well," said the gentleman, as he saw the map rolled up and Warrener waiting, "will it substantially take your mind from us?"

"Oh, no, sir!"

"You don't wish to leave us?"

"I couldn't sir," Warrener hurried. "I'll give this up first. Of course, then risk *would* come in, if I undertook this with"—he didn't now say, "nothing back of me"—"no sure situation. It wouldn't be fair to my wife."

"Exactly," nodded Harkweather. He sat away from his table and considered George, who was spruce freshness itself. "Warrener, I believe you are going to be a rising man."

The clerk colored with delight. The humor of the prediction to a man of thirty-nine years was not apparent to him.

"Don't mistake between the full baskets, however, and be sure the fruit is sound all through the one you choose. Now, if you are to remain with us, you will continue to give us your first thoughts, give us no cause to feel your interest is primarily elsewhere. If this turns out to be a big thing, your thoughts *will* be primarily elsewhere, and you will leave us. Meanwhile, I am going to advance you, on my own authority. You may work in my private

room, replace Mr. Jenkins at his table. We will double your salary."

Warrener held fast to the table where his hand lay, and did not stir, lest he should spring awake and find himself dreaming.

"Don't," warned his chief, evenly, "take this as a precedent. It foreshadows nothing more, nothing else. It is, without doubt, the best we can ever do for you. When it becomes insufficient, you will, naturally, leave us."

As the other accepted this definite proposition, too dazed to know what he held in his hand, and whether the jewels were real or false, Harkweather cleared his throat and said, casually:

"Your stock sells at—?" Warrener named the figure. "You may buy us a block and put it away in the safe. We'll gamble a little with you, Warrener."

This had occurred on Warrener's return from Oil City, and late that afternoon, at the time appointed for him to take his train, he was so stimulated with excitement that he felt as if he had been overdrinking. He took a place in the stern, near the railing, and the heavy ferry slowly left her dark, evil-smelling pier. The atmosphere was misty, the waters over which the paddle passed curled back with a sinister, shadowy aspect, save where the lights of the passing boats struck them with an oily, shifting glint or where the paddle stirred the edges of the waves into scattered foam. Once out in the stream, the lighted city he left behind him, seen in perspective, rose mightily along the shore with an impressiveness, a dignity, something close to splendor. Warrener looked at New York with a newly born sense of intelligence.

It had been a hard, weary mistress for the business clerk—a Moloch to whom daily he offered up the excessive tithe of time that was legal tender for so much flesh and blood; but to-night it wore a new aspect: it was a goddess who favored him. Myriad windows in the high, narrow façades of myriad buildings shone out like gold. Clear, brilliant signs, sparkling and intense, flashed their claim to public attention

in electric stars; great spirals and columns of smoke, like geysers of snow, rose, curled, hung over the uneven outlines of the building tops and roofs.

It was a world of light, a range of luminous mountains coming down to the harbor and port. It seemed a goodly, beautiful sight to the single passenger in the ferry's stern—a brilliant city of promise of success. Harkweather was in it, his friends and acquaintances were in it, his old friends and his new. As it receded, grew illusive and mysterious in the night mists, smaller and more fantastic, he thought of it with affection. There were no orgies connected with it in the memory of the hard-worked, decent-minded man, he had no memories of it connected with pleasure. It meant everything to him to work, and with his senses and aspirations all developed toward commerce and finance, he loved it perhaps none the less.

As he mused he made no plans for adding to his expenses or changing his way of living. But he would be able to put aside something out of his income, he would increase his life insurance. He had telephoned to the house that he would not be home before midnight; it was not yet ten. The maid who let him in told him that Mrs. Warrener was out.

"Why, where did she go to?" he asked, in great disappointment and surprise.

Katy did not know. Mrs. Warrener had gone out at three o'clock, and had not been home since—she had not ordered dinner.

He decided on an impromptu card party, and, going upstairs to his den, settled himself to wait for her as well as he could. With his new interests to keep him company, he saw two hours pass, and finally jumped up and ran downstairs to let his wife in himself.

She said: "Why, I thought you weren't coming home till midnight." She was not in party trim, but in her new street dress. He kissed her tenderly.

"I got off earlier. Where on earth have you been?"

It was a hard question to answer for the woman unused to subterfuge or deceit.

"Let me go in first and take my things off, won't you?"

But her husband, with his own great news at his tongue's end, would hardly have observed had she even omitted to tell him at all.

"Poor Miss Whistler!" Gertrude said. "She's been sick again. I went over this afternoon, and I've been up with her ever since."

"Oh!" he accepted. "Well, I thought you never would come home. I've got some news to tell you."

They were upstairs in their room, and George began. She listened to him, the fact of money chaining her. She had taken off her skirt and bodice, and stood at the foot of the brass bed, her hands folded, one over the other, on the knob. Her bare shoulders and arms, where the flesh was smooth and fine, the blue veins of the inner arm, the soft bloom on the round elbow, the generous lines of her neck and swelling of the white breast, made her a sight to hold the eyes of any man.

But Warrener was eagerly leaning over to untie his boots. As he straightened himself up she said:

"Well, the first thing to do is to get out of this awful house. There's the Brewers', on Hillside Avenue. It's for rent, and I can go uptown to-morrow and see the agent."

The light died in Warrener's face.

"We can't afford it," he said, quickly, and, for him, decidedly. "That house is 'way up, and I like this one; what's the matter with it? We can't change our lives just because I'm getting a rise."

"Then what's the good of it?" she asked, with an impatient gesture of her blond head. "This house is all right enough for you, of course—you only sleep in it. But I have to live in it day in and day out. If you haven't got any money, why, then, we have to put up with it, but if you've got the rent of a better, I don't see why I shouldn't have it."

She spoke with considerable agitation, and Warrener, utterly unable to

cope with a woman's caprices and humors, was completely dazed by the sudden contingent that her wish, nay, her command, raised. His increased insurance, the ease and rest his added income promised, faded, but he didn't lightly renounce.

"Come, Gerty," he said, almost humbly, and came toward her a few steps. "Let's go on a little as we are. This Wisconsin scheme may not pan out as it looks."

"You've got this rise, haven't you, George?"

"Sure!"

"Well, that's enough to pay the rent up there." She turned toward the glass and began to undo her hair.

Warrener was seized with a stupid desire to slap her, to sting her to reason. Not being sufficient brute to master the selfish, capricious creature, he lost the mood almost as soon as it came, and saddened. He was quite rid of his elation. He had brought, as it were, his booty back to a tree from which the nest was gone.

"I thought I'd take on a bigger insurance," he said.

Mrs. Warrener laughed.

"Why, you'll see me out!" she exclaimed, in a hard voice. "You know I've had grip four times, and the doctor said this house was a regular microbe-breeder."

She let her hair fall loose, a bright, shining shower, and brushed it out with unusual care. It had been washed that day, and the dry, electrified ends clung to the brush and sprang out a golden fleece. Its luster caught her husband's eye before which gold had danced all day. Gertrude's bare arm flashed back and forth as she brushed. She finally braided her hair. He had permitted himself, or, rather, a kind of exhilarating ecstasy had been his all the evening, caused by the little turn of fortune's wheel, but now a more human feeling stirred in him. This was his wife. She had consented so to be. She did so much for him—it was an honor to be the protector of so much soft, helpless womanhood. Why, he couldn't do half enough for her! Hadn't done half

enough! He was a brute not to accomplish her wishes before they were expressed. He thanked goodness he had the money, anyway. Already a little frightened at the time he had lost, and self-reproachful, he said, as she turned from the glass:

"Say, Gert, that's all right, you go up and see about Brewer's to-morrow."

She had expected to cajole and coax him, and, repugnant as the idea was to her, she had determined to try her wiles. At his too ready capitulation she was surprised, and regarded him with something less than scorn for his easy defeat. But she counted without her host. Her beauty, which had gained and deepened—was gaining and deepening every day—was turning Warrener's head.

"You're as pretty as a peach," he said, gently. "Come and give us a kiss, little girl."

A great revulsion swept over her; she wanted to escape him, to run away. It was not the thought of fidelity to another man that revolted her—simply dislike and hatred of George; but she did not dare to refuse him. As she was in his arms, so she had been in McAllister's. George's caresses sought his wife's lips that were still warm with the embraces of another man. With a sense of shame and humiliation and disgust she yielded herself.

All things of value have their price, and if Warrener felt he paid a high rent for the new home into which they moved within a fortnight, Gertrude bought her luxury with degradation.

CHAPTER XIX.

One Sunday, a few weeks later, the clerk moved about dismantled rooms, as altered to him as the faces of the dead.

The air of disorder, the sharp edges of the disturbing to-morrow, cut into what peace there was in his Sunday holiday.

He found himself getting into his wife's way; his suggestions and advice in no wise coincided with her arrangements, and he contrived, after the first, to get out from under her feet, after

asking for different objects which he missed and which meant home for him, like a mariner for landmarks that have disappeared from familiar shores. He said, pathetically:

"I feel like a cat in a strange garret, and I guess I'll be stranger yet in the new house—at first." He added these last words hastily, fearing his wife would be displeased.

"Well, my back's just broken." She came in with a sigh, pushing back her shining, ruffled hair. "You wouldn't think it could take nearly two days to pack up the little we've got to move."

She sat down on the packing box.

"I'm glad there aren't any neighbors on Hillside Avenue, for they can't see us unload. We've got just about enough things to go in one room."

She was pretty—fatally pretty—if she were nothing else. Perhaps in his married life he had never cared so much for her as during the last few weeks, while she was growing daily more agreeable to look at and more alluring. He came over and sat beside her on the box. His short legs, his feet in their heavy, broad-soled, low shoes, stretched out before him.

"This makes me think of sitting on a box in a grocer's when I was a boy. That's the way old McAllister started in—not sitting on a box, but in a grocery, and he worked his way through college."

She said, meditatively: "Well, then, you started better than he did, for there aren't any storekeepers in your family—and I guess you stand a good chance to get rich now, George."

Warrener said:

"I shan't ever be rich. I don't want money bad enough. I haven't got rich tastes, or the push."

She drew away from him, raised her head a little, and an irritated look crossed her serenity.

"Oh, I think you're real mean! I care to be rich, and I think you might push a little, like other men do."

He put his arm around her waist.

"Well, I'm doing all right now, aren't I? I've made a step on this month."

She tried to keep her body from stiffening into iron under his touch.

"Well," she grugged, "it's got us out of this nasty little house, anyhow."

"Don't speak that way, Gert. It's our last day here."

Mrs. Warrener disengaged herself.

"You'll muss me all up, George. And you're always talking about last days and anniversaries. You make me tired."

"Of course I'll think it's fine," he said, affectionately, "and the house doesn't make any difference, after all. It'll be a kind of new honeymoon, hey?"

A physical and mental revulsion at his words, at the audacity of his souvenirs—at his right to her—made her pale in his arms. He had never been demonstrative. Weeks, months, passed with no more than a chance caress. She did not realize that her deepening nature, her awakened passions, made her desirable to the one who had a right to her, as well as to the other.

"Let me get up," she said, impatiently. "I hate to be fussed over, George; you know it. Let me be!"

She heard him sigh as she flounced up off the box, and not compunction but a desire to "keep him all right" made her put one hand on his shoulder and say:

"You'll get just as fond of the new house, see if you don't. It's so roomy. If I could fix it up as I want, you'd think it was elegant."

Unable to stay any longer with him, she made an excuse for going over to see Miss Thistle, to bid her good-by. George watched her as, hatless, in her light dress, she fairly ran down the steps and into the next house, her hair bright in the sun.

"She's right," he mused. "I'm not pushing enough. She's 'way above the rest of the folks here. She's got an elegant figure, and she ought to have better things."

The new concern where his interests were engaged was a doorway into independence; he would force it wide as it would go. He shook himself as he stood, settled his collar and cravat,

brushed a little dust off his clothes and went out of the house onto the porch. As he did so he saw the Bellamy automobile drive up, with the two gentlemen in it.

"Mrs. Warrener at home? It is so mild to-day. We've just run 'round to see if you and she would care to take a little turn as far as Pool Wood, and then have an informal supper at Mrs. Bellamy's afterward?"

Warrener had gone up to the side of the automobile and shaken hands with Mr. Bellamy and Mr. McAllister.

"My wife's just looked in next door." His tone was brisk and cheerful. Their arrival at the moment of his determined decisions was a stimulus and an incentive. "I can get her in a minute. I think she'd like to go."

Gertrude's forced visit to the member of the Shut-In Society was happily broken imperiously in upon by the horn of the motor, and she came down the steps before the others had finished speaking. As she made some objection to going in the dress she wore, McAllister said:

"Please don't change it. It's perfectly charming. I don't think you'll be cold—but fetch plenty of wraps."

They were brought her, and she got in beside McAllister, Bellamy and her husband behind.

As the motor turned into the main road McAllister said:

"You're more adorable to-night than I have ever seen you—and that's saying a good deal. Bellamy and your husband will talk business after dinner, and I shall have you to myself."

CHAPTER XX.

Mr. Bellamy had been several times to Wall Street to inform himself as to the workings of the N. E. W. Oil Company. Warrener was extremely flattered with his cordiality; he knew that the friendliness of the rich man had its impression on Harkweather. He said to his wife:

"Everything like this counts in business. You keep friends with Mrs. Bellamy. It's a help to me."

Bellamy, although, as he said, "not actively engaged in business," was unable to keep his hands off a gamble of some kind. There was nothing in the life of this mediocre, *borné* suburban clerk to interest this rich man of the world—so it would seem—and yet from the first time he talked with this unobtrusive guest in his own house, Bellamy had taken an interest in him. Harkweather, in speaking of Warrener, unconsciously made George's merits appear sterling. In talking of him to Bellamy, Harkweather was praising one of his own possessions; in speaking well of Warrener he proved how ably and wisely he surrounded himself in his office.

"There's a man," he said, "who suffers like the people in the Old Testament, because he 'hath not.' If he'd only been born with a little money back of him, he'd have made his way. I think I've never seen a clearer business mind, nor a more apt financial sense."

One day Bellamy said to Warrener: "I have been offered the position of president of the N. E. W., you know. I don't know how long my wife will stand America, or I should have been tempted. There's the treasurer's post not filled yet. I may as well tell you, Warrener, that your name was mentioned very favorably in connection with it."

The astonished man echoed:

"*Mine!* I guess it wasn't me. I haven't any capital or backers."

Bellamy nodded pleasantly.

"They think you have other qualifications distinctly, you know—your long training in such a house as Harkweather's, your familiarity with present finance. If you had a capital of two hundred thousand dollars you would be elected to this office. It's extraordinary how money makes the whole thing go, isn't it?"

Warrener, to whom a dazzling vision of the opportunity rose with a brilliancy that dazzled him, said, vulgarly:

"Yes, it's the very hell!"

Bellamy admitted:

"It's a power, certainly. What you should do, it seems to me, is to proselyte—if I may use the word—for your

company; that is, to interest a few rich and influential people—get them in while the stock is low. Be the means of securing a few orders to buy, and present these names to your board—you understand me?"

Warrener nodded.

"I haven't got any influential friends."

Bellamy smiled. "Harkweather tells me he has bought a block of you, and he will eventually take on more." He put his hand familiarly on the clerk's arm. "I shall feel as if I were actually in business again myself if I watch the fortunes of the N. E. W. I shall give you an order for me when you see fit, and sell when you see fit. I'll send you a check this week."

Warrener said, warmly: "I should buy in right away. I guess you'll double your capital, Mr. Bellamy, in a year. I couldn't advise anyone about a thing like this, but if you feel inclined to go in, why, you won't make any mistake. I am much obliged for your interest and your advice, and I know your influence is a big thing for me all around."

The clerk's quiet confidence and lack of truckling enthusiasm made Bellamy like him all the better.

"I think it would be better to put the stock away for a year," said Bellamy. "We'll forget all about it. I won't trouble you about the matter. Just let me know when you sell out."

Mrs. Warrener did not, as it might appear, move into her new abode with the impracticability of a child, but with the subtlety of a woman whose intentions and caprices are twin and the same. But it would be allotting her too great intelligence to say she planned. Gertrude Warrener never had a plan in her life. She expressed in one hour all her possibilities. She acted as she felt, without reflection, compunction or remorse.

There were several handsome rugs on the floor, a few pieces of more imposing furniture here and there; lamps under silken shades supplemented the harsher electric lights. Every new article was representative of a taste that

had developed and grown under McAllister's direction.

Mrs. Warrener did not resign from her clubs, but she never attended their meetings, and her deserted parlor and the cold salutations in the market place revealed the general spirit of the town.

But Gertrude was taking a very minute interest in her wardrobe and her personal adornment.

Put away in her bureau drawer was a handsome set of manicure instruments, and in the morning, after she was dressed, she "did her nails," spending an hour over them until the tips of her rather spatulated fingers shone like jewels. To this super-refinement Mrs. Bellamy added flashing rings. Save for the circle of gold George had given her at her wedding, Gertrude's hands were bare.

The contemplation of herself in the mirror, the arranging and rearranging of her hair, the fantastic reveries in which she imagined dresses and underwear far beyond the means of anyone whose husband was a salaried clerk—the sub-excitement in which she lived so engrossed her that she had no time for Slocum!

Having learned the art of comparison, she began to compare her husband with Mr. McAllister, and found poor George sadly wanting. After the tone and accent of McAllister's voice had grown familiar to her, she was rasped by her husband's nasal, his careless English, and his quick, loud outbursts of merriment. His lack of manner, his *sans-gêne* and American frankness, without pretense to polish or courtesy, offended her, for Mrs. Warrener had developed tastes.

Alongside of the gentleman she constantly saw, whose delicate attentions and thoughtful provision for her were around her like the fragrance of a hot-house atmosphere, George, in his crude insensibility, seemed to her a veritable boor.

CHAPTER XXI.

One night Warrener was reading his evening paper, opening it for the first at the late hour of nine o'clock, when

his wife came up behind his chair and let her hands fall on his shoulders.

Surprised at her voluntary act of affection, for he took it as such, he caught both her wrists.

"My, how your nails shine!"

"Don't they look pretty?"

"Sure!"

He held the hands tightly in his, and as she made them free and came around in front of him she said:

"But they seem so awfully bare, George."

She held them out.

"Put some gloves on, then," he said, humorously, but he confessed in the same breath, as if he made a confidence:

"Sometimes I stop in at the jewelers', on lower Broadway, and pick out a couple of rings I'd like to give you, Gert. But for any kind of a decent diamond it's a fortune."

His wife seated herself on the arm of his chair and leaned over him.

"I'd like two rings: a sapphire and diamond, and a little oblong ring."

"I bet you would!" he laughed. "Couldn't you use a couple of solitaires, little girl?" Warrener was thinking less of what he said and the subject than of her friendliness and proximity. The last months had been so tense that he had scarcely seen her at all, and whenever she gave herself the trouble to be nice to him he vaguely realized how little time he had to enjoy his wife.

"It's too mean!" she exclaimed. "What seems such a joke to us is no more than what lots of women are used to every day." And before he could say anything that bordered on the sentimental, for she felt his softening toward her, she had taken from her pocket a small, blue velvet box.

"Say, George, I've got something elegant to show you."

She opened the jewel case and showed him where on the satin lay two rings—the sapphire and diamond, and the marquise.

Warrener stared stupidly at them; then less stupidly at his handsome wife.

"Why, Gert!"—there was a hesitat-

ing, anxious note in his voice. "Where did you get those from?"

Her eyes frankly met her husband's.

"Don't look so scared. Where do you suppose I got them? I didn't steal them. I saw them in Tiffany's the other day, and I asked them to let me bring them home on approval. If you can't buy them for me"—Warrener was keen to feel the vague hint of scorn—"why, I'll just have to take them back, of course."

"Tiffany's! Why, they don't know me. How did they let you take them away with you?"

"Mrs. Bellamy was with me, and she gave her name."

The petty director on a petty board of a promising scheme took the jewels in his hand. Their facets flashed at him beautiful and cold; they challenged his pride and his gallantry. As he handled them his wonder and discomfort and trouble grew. He thought:

"What in thunder does Mrs. Bellamy think I make, if I can afford to buy such things as this for my wife!"

He was about to frankly deny Gertrude with more than usual courage and reprove her fatal folly; indeed, he would have done so, but the woman, made keen by her desire, had psychologically understood his train of thought. She leaned over, laid her arm around his neck and her cheek close to his; of her own accord she had never done such a thing before. She exhaled a delicious perfume, like a bouquet of flowers, and through the thin material of her shirt-waist Warrener could feel her heart beat. She held him for a moment, more convulsively than tightly, then slipped the rings on her fingers and flashed her hand before his eyes. She murmured, caressingly:

"Say, aren't those just too lovely for anything, George? They set the hand off so."

The man's voice was hoarse and trembled as he asked her:

"How much are they, Gerty?"

And she told him in figures that danced before his eyes. But more impossibly did the words "I can't do it, I can't afford it," refuse to come to his

lips. What would she do? Cry? Withdraw her arm and its soft contact in petulant displeasure? He had had so starvingly little of this feminine deliciousness and sweetness. She was at her subtlest to-night, for as he struggled with the right and wrong she bent down and kissed him.

Warrener turned where he sat, brusquely and strongly seized her and drew her over into his arms. The little velvet box rattled to the floor.

The next day George gave her a check. As the rings had already been paid for, Gertrude bought herself a stole of sable fur that fell from her neck to her feet. When she drove with Mrs. Bellamy to New York in the automobile, the lady lifted the end of the sable and admired it, not without envy. Gertrude naïvely asked: "Do you think it is real? I got it at a fire sale down on Grand Street."

"Real? Why, it's perfectly superb!"

Mrs. Warrener was superb—her little blond head rising from the depths of the sable, the soft white of her neck, and the charming curls of her hair above the dark shadow of the fur.

Even if she had been capable of love, Gertrude would never have loved Paul McAllister; their classes were too different, the abyss between them too marked. But he absorbed her; she wanted to dress as he liked, and to look as well as anybody of his acquaintance for his approval, to please him, and to prove that she was an "elegant lady" as he had ever known. Her limited intelligence and her vapid mind offered no interest for them to share in common. She was reserved with him, mentally ill at ease and conscious of her inferiority. It made her irritated and angry, and her humor revealed itself often in a complete silence on her part, which McAllister took for sulks and never understood. No amount of passion betrayed her into a word or exclamation beyond her commonplace, ordinary mediocrity. The man, however, considered her in one relation only, and she had not as yet palled upon him.

Their meetings, usually in New York, were few, and carefully con-

trived by him. He often came to tea with her in the Hillside Avenue house. She had learned to preside over this pretty custom gracefully, and took pride in her trays and silver and linen, accessories of which no one in Slocum had ever seen the counterpart. The tea kettle was so heavy and unwieldy she could scarcely turn out the hot water. The silver dazzled the eyes of the little barbarian, whose smiles and favor were as easy of purchase as the savage's good will for a string of beads.

Mrs. Warrener's reveries entertained no conscientious scruples; she knew no pangs of remorse. When her conduct forced itself upon her contemplation she resolutely shut it out, opening her mind to the attendant covetousness that is always ready to take hands with certain indulgences. She planned new toilets, she subscribed to Paris dress journals, she had a woman from New York to treat and brush her hair and to give her massage. For years she had been as dormant as a rock-immured spring, and, once set free, she wanted in her liberty. She used all her tact to disguise her distraction from her husband. Her costumes, her ripening beauty, gave him at once a satisfaction and a sort of dismay; she seemed so far above him—his tired eyes and his busy brain could hardly follow her progress, a progress which, if he had known it, was a shameful one indeed.

As for the husband, he was like a man in a crowd whose pockets are being picked, and while he instinctively claps hands on one, the other is meanwhile rifled. In the tussle and rush about him, it required Warrener's supreme force to keep on his feet.

The picturesque image did not present itself to him as he laboriously filled in every hour of his working days, giving his first best to the firm in which he was confidential clerk, and consecrating his holidays, Sundays and late nights to the interests of the N. E. W.

His company was stepping out. It promised good and great things. Encouraging reports were brought from the West, and during the time spent downtown he was in whirl of excite-

ment such as is easily understood by any business man who, while he is undertaking and fostering a new interest, has back of him unaltered the cares and exigencies of old complications. There was at this time a pleasurable intoxication in his business hours. He met new men, and found the long accumulated studies of years greatly to his service. His apprenticeship in a conservative and estimable house stood him in good stead. He proved an authority, in a small way—in a very small way—on stocks and bonds and investments. He had been like a mirror across which for years facts, data, ideas, projects, had been reflected. Only, in this case the human mirror had kept them all. To his gratification, he saw that his knowledge possessed a certain value, that there were people willing to pay for it something according to its worth.

Meanwhile the demands of his household kept him eager. If he could only see ahead, everything would be all right!

He sold his bonds at a profit, cut recklessly into the small capital, confident that N. E. W. would recoup him; he paid up all his house-furnishing bills, and was not unhappy.

The Bellamys slipped out of the foreground of the Warreners' life. The family went to Palm Beach, not to return until spring, and Gertrude had Slocum and McAllister to herself without the discomfort which she felt under the critical scrutiny of Mrs. Bellamy's eyes—eyes expressing frankly understanding, contempt and reproof.

During the hard months of winter George made his weary journeys on packed ferryboats, whose crossings were delayed by snow and ice; in suffocating trains sometimes snowbound for hours in the bleak country. But the elements and their wars were matter of indifference to the treasurer of the N. E. W., who ignored what the thermometer registered or the barometer indicated. In his seat by the car window, when the temperature marked ninety-degrees, the fever in his veins outburned the heat; he was adding and subtracting,

multiplying and dividing. He waited patiently for cars in the patient crowds in the snow-piled streets of New York. He sat uncomplainingly on the immobile ferry, held between jams of floating ice. He was absorbed, his brain working at terrible speed. He was adding, multiplying, subtracting, trying to keep the pace, to keep his feet, to grasp the meanings of the lightning-changing disks that the kaleidoscope flashed out to him. He avoided his old friends, shrank from sharing a seat with an old-time crony—indeed, would rather miss a seat if he found he were likely to be buttonholed by some good-natured man whom he had known all his life.

Scandal and rumor were busy with his name in the little town. George Warrener, of Grant Street, who was hail-fellow-well-met with his butcher and his servant, had disappeared, and the silent, morose man who took his place was at once envied and pitied by his townspeople because it was generally understood that George Warrener was growing rich, and that he was the dupe of a woman.

Nor could Mrs. Warrener have told whether the winter were mild or severe. Her time was spent in caring for her beautiful body, in dressing, planning her toilets, in intrigues and deceptions, in keeping her appointments with McAllister in New York. The pretty woman who with flushed cheeks and sparkling eyes sat by the train window in the cars, with the temperature at ninety degrees, whose excitement rose to a greater fever heat, was in strong contrast to her husband's figure. For her the trains went too slow and the ferries crawled, or else they went too fast, for they took her back to Slocum. She was the first to leave the boat as it clanged its doors open at the pier. She, too, steered clear of her Slocum friends, avoided them, and they did not make it difficult. She, too, sat in her corner of the ferry musing and indifferent, inconsequent, beautiful and debased. There was nothing in the world that could unite the husband and wife whose mental distractions were so complete and whose meditations were so different.

TO BE CONTINUED.



THE BEGGAR

A LITTLE Love stole through the dusk,
 Crept wraith-like through the gloom;
 Until he reached the empty hearth
 Within my lonely room.

He was so cold—perforce I made
 A fire to keep him warm,
 So fearful—could I do aught else
 Than shelter him from harm?

But when my gifts of warmth and cheer
 Had cleared his wistful brow,
 He flew away with all I had—
 'Tis I am beggared now!

CHARLOTTE BECKER.

IN THE GARAGE

B. ROBERT E.
MacALARNEY



I was half dark in the garage; there was only the dim glow from the grilled beam lanterns before the closed sliding doors at the end of the runway. From without came the tap of the hansom horses' hoofs upon the avenue asphalt. These noises, the garage tenants knew, meant that late diners, who had lingered over their coffee, were hastening for the first act at the theater.

Those within the shed reflected that for themselves were at least two hours of undisturbed retirement. The last arrival had entered fifteen minutes ago, a slim gray car, with much "chug-chugging" of gasoline motors, and a French oath from its leather-coated guardian as he pinched his fingers while bending down among the machinery. But now even old Juggernaut, the disabled "Seeing New York" coach, which stood a towering hulk in the rearmost shadows, an invalid taking the rest cure—the garage gossips whispered it among themselves that the ponderous one's days of activity were over forever—knew that the chauffeurs were spending a period of cigarettes and chat with the cabmen in front of Delmonico's, or with the electric coupé drivers around the portico pillars at Sherry's.

This was the only time of night that all the cars were together, save, perhaps, for one or two off on a run into Jersey, or down Long Island way, for the week end. The garage was but a semi-private one, it is true, where room for automobiles was rented. Yet it was none the less select, for the same own-

ers retained their floor spaces for months at a time; and there were few, if any, strangers admitted to the shed fellowship.

To no one was this more pleasing than to the Juggernaut, who, compelled to remain in retirement continuously, liked to see familiar tonneau colors about him, and to discuss styles of hill-taking with old comrades. It was matter for speculation just how the old coach was first admitted to the club. The reckless little yellow buckboard, which made almost daily jumps out to the Baltusrol golf links, once confided to the dignified, black electric victoria that there was really a scandal back of the Juggernaut's enforced retirement—something about a breakdown in Madison Square in front of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, while the coach of a rival company rolled by triumphantly, its megaphone man calling gleeful attention to the plight of his rival.

"I got it from a touring car outside the Albemarle, while my master went in for a drink one Saturday afternoon," the buckboard had said. "They'll grow weary of putting the Juggernaut on a pension before long, mark my word. Then it will be a chauffeur in overalls and a trip out of the shed to—who knows where?"

"It's dreadful," the victoria had murmured, in reply. "A worn-out public servant is a pathetic thing."

The victoria had thrilled to her soft cushions, as she imagined herself towed off to the junk heap, far from her liveried *mecanicien* and the violet-scented frocks which ordinarily made up the most of her freight.

"Oh, I don't know," the buckboard

had answered; "all of us must come to an end some time, just like our masters. I notice a black band every now and then on the sleeve of a chauffeur. They say that our masters, too, find the junk heap when their carbureters are burned out and can't be replaced."

"Who is the new car?" the victoria asked of the buckboard to-night. "The dashing one who just came in. I've never had a good look at him before. There's a *verve* about him somehow that I find attractive."

"He's a Frenchman. . . The 'Gray Ghost,' they call him," said the buckboard. "He's entered in a dozen cup races for next season, and his driver is a professional record-breaker from Paris. I've seen them watching the polo games up at Van Cortlandt Park, and they give everything the dust on the way home."

"I'd hate to be driven like that." The victoria shivered delicately, with a faint rattle of springs and lamps. "I shouldn't feel at all comfortable far from smooth asphalt. The tangles of cabs and cars in the shopping district give me all I can do to manage, without speeding on an unpleasantly dusty road. I don't think my batteries could stand that."

"That's because you're electric, and low-powered," said the buckboard. "You see, we're all meant for our own particular line. Look at me. Now, I'm built for even speed, not spurts, and while they've given me good driving power and a water circulating pump, they haven't been particular about my voice. Confidentially, I'm a husky talker. You can hear me calling a quarter mile away, if the wind is with me. But I'm steady as a street car and never get tired. I like the road."

"You like the road?" said a thin, metallic voice.

Again the black victoria gently shook her springs and lamps. "Who is talking?" she whispered.

"It's the Gray Ghost," the buckboard whispered back. "He speaks English like a native. He's been on this side for more than a year now."

The Juggernaut's deep tone inter-

rupted. It came from the corner with a low rumble. Even the Gray Ghost was not rakish enough to continue a conversation without waiting for the old car's speech.

"Mighty poor taste, say I," growled the Juggernaut. "I've never been very far out on the road, not further than the hill that takes the life out of your motors while you make the turn around Grant's Tomb. But what I've seen I don't like. It's too uncertain. There's a slipperiness about wet dirt that you never can get used to. It's different on a pavement. You know every angle of slide there, and can keep your footing."

"Oh, indeed, I agree with you," remarked the victoria.

"If you've got a skillful man at the throttle—" began the Gray Ghost, politely.

"That doesn't wipe out the hills," snapped the old car. "And I've never seen one of you racing motors come in from a road run yet that you weren't grimy and scratched, and half the time coughing so badly that your wrist pins and cylinders were sick. To stick to the road is suicide, I tell you."

"Oh, think of the Juggernaut talking like that!" gurgled the victoria. A hum at once arose from the other machines, who were discussing the old car's remarks among themselves.

The Gray Ghost was the one who returned to the charge. "The road is hard work when you're pushed," he said. "I grant you that. But the better part of it is worth all the strained gears you get."

"I limped home once from the Claremont," said the Juggernaut, reflectively, "and one wheel was sore for a month afterward."

"That's because they didn't give you an extra tire lashed on behind," the buckboard broke in. "They had no right to send you out without your traveling kit."

"We can't afford to carry an extra pound in our line," returned the Juggernaut, crushingly. "It's different with playthings."

"Never mind," the victoria rippled to

her neighbor, soothingly. "He's old and sick, remember."

"I mean to keep on until I go to pieces, anyway," said the buckboard, stoutly, limbering up his yellow length and sighing with content as he found all true. "And when my time comes for going out of commission, I want it to be with some grass and a field or two in sight, and my pieces lying near enough to the road to hear now and then some strong and happy car go rasping by."

"Indeed!" snorted the Juggernaut.

"No garage sanitarium for me," the buckboard finished.

"Oh, do hush," begged the victoria. "He's old and worn out, and remembering hurts him."

"Your going out of commission wouldn't be felt," the Juggernaut said, after a long pause. "You've never carried anything outside of your chauffeur and a bag of golf clubs, and, perhaps, a girl. In my time I've carried twelve top seats filled, and my motors alone weighed as much as you do. I had two of them, with reduction gears and individual chains. And my power came from an oxide battery of forty-four cells slung below. Add a wheel base of one hundred and twelve inches, and there's something of a load, eh, friend? And when you're built to maintain an even six miles an hour on city streets, but have to stop within twelve feet when ordered, to prevent accidents, even seven-inch rubber tires feel the tug, I can tell you."

All the cars knew that the Juggernaut was turning to the Gray Ghost for moral support.

"That is truly something, as you say," the French car agreed. "I've never heard of any boulevard coach beating that record."

"I should think not," said the old car, somewhat mollified. "And I had to keep my temper as well on the up grade, with bridal couples from the farm talking into my ear. The most annoying pair I ever carried was on the seat just in front of the man with the megaphone. They were from Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania. They told the

megaphone man that, without his even asking them."

"The dear things! They were in love," said the victoria. "I've heard a bit of sentiment now and then myself on the way home from the opera."

"They told the megaphone man they were from Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania," repeated the Juggernaut, with reproving emphasis. "And they said——"

There was a murmur from the garage corners. "I say, it's a point of honor for us not to violate the confidences of our charges," interposed the buckboard. "They trust us, you know."

"They were from——" The Juggernaut got no further, for there was a din of rattled lamps, and every gear shook in its meshing.

The Gray Ghost's voice was finally heard above the confusion. "Come, now," he said. "If you American cars have that code of honor, I feel that it should be respected. I know that my heavy comrade will agree with us."

"I meant no harm," said the old car. "I hope I recognize the ethics of our calling, but this bridal couple was particularly aggravating."

"Goodness!" confided the victoria to the buckboard. "That's the first time I ever heard the Juggernaut admit that he might have been wrong."

"It's the Frenchman's way," returned the yellow machine. "The Parisian courtesy is infectious."

"We are all comrades," the gray car went on. "All of us use the same gasoline or restore our nervous energy from the same charging battery. Each of us has his own way to make, his own work to do, and must live up to the ideals of his occupation. But I'll confess we French cars gossip a bit too much. There is so much doing on the Bois, and possibly we are elevated to an absurd importance over there. At any rate, we discuss our masters and their guests freely enough. Why should we not, when our *mecaniciens* do the same thing in our hearing?"

"A French anecdote," murmured the victoria; "I feel that it is coming. It will

be delightful, I am sure, but will it be quite proper?"

There was a rustle of expectation among all the gears.

"I relate this merely to show my good friend, the Juggernaut, that there is a mission upon the road as well as in the town," the gray car went on.

"In the sunlight, now, I could show you traces of that mission. They've never quite patched me up; my master calls my bent plates honorable scars."

"You interest me," said the Juggernaut, respect in his tones. "I did not know that you, too, were a veteran."

"Some of you are familiar with the Long Island roads," the Gray Ghost continued. "I spent a month among them last summer. I got to know pretty nearly all the houses in and around Southampton, but there was one lane turn I took more than any other, and by the middle of August I came to regard it as an every-evening custom to stand with my lamps turned low on the gravel driveway near the stables of a country house that was a mass of brick and red shingles and overdone gables. My master, of course, was upon the piazza, somewhere among the vines. There were striped awnings to lower if the moonlight was ridiculously bright, and, perhaps, a hammock. In short—" The gray car paused delicately.

It was the Juggernaut who broke the stillness. "There was a girl," said the old car.

"*Merci.* You have said it," answered the other. "As girls go, she was most alluring. She was a perfect type of your American woman. We Frenchmen, it is true, prefer something a trifle more ethereal. This girl was what you might call ethereal plus the sureness of stride and dash of manner that golf and freedom from too many chaperons contribute. My master was, you see, in love."

The individual clicking among the other gears, as they talked to one another in an undertone, had ceased now. Every car in the garage was listening eagerly. There had never been a real story-teller among them before; the

monologues of the Juggernaut had been rather more like sermons than stories.

"And love, you must know," continued the gray car, "is very much the same everywhere. It is not different in France than in this, your own country. And also is there the same ignorance among our masters, who never pause to think that the motors which take them racing like the wind to the side of the woman they care for; that run the risk of ruining delicate gears in the effort to keep a tardy lover's engagement punctually upon the minute—that *we* understand. Why, I have scuttered along with my master when he showed me a dozen different moods in less than five miles.

"I've heard him laugh and swear by turns. The latter was only when he mentioned the other man, of whom more hereafter. And, once in a while, sliding home smoothly at night, loafing along over those glorious Shinnecock hills, I've heard him speak a girl's name aloud, with none but the stars and myself to hear. He'd say it in a whisper at first, as if he were afraid the breeze might catch it up out of his lips and go calling it over the scrub pines, out into the bay with its fleet of drowsy, anchored yachts. But, after a while, he'd speak it with confidence, almost boldly, not once but many times. When this would happen I knew that things had gone well at the many-gabled house, and, upon reflection, I always recalled that then I had seen the other man's car lamps flash up and out of the driveway long before my master and I had started. So I used to laugh in my own way as I heard him."

"They never recognize our laugh," remarked the Juggernaut, ponderously. "When I used to laugh my driver would always get worried. He thought there was something wrong with my motors."

"And yet I had no true reason for laughing," said the gray car. "For there was a tragedy behind the last time I had heard a man speak a woman's name aloud like that. My first master, the Count de—there's no use mentioning names—tooled me home

from Longchamps one day, and there was a name sounding boldly upon his lips, too—a woman's name, of course. He never steered me to the races again."

"Ah!" said the black victoria, eagerly.

"There had been some thrusting, the kind which you make game of over here," said the Gray Ghost, "only this time it was in earnest. When my master's garage went at the executor's sale I was brought to America. I have put France very far behind me, and the old story seems almost musty to me. I don't believe I could be sure of the French girl's name now." He was silent for a little while.

"He has memories," the victoria confided to the yellow buckboard. "And memories are worth having, even if they hurt."

But the gray machine was speaking again. "Your pardon, my friends," he said. "Where were we? Ah, yes, Southampton and my new master, and the name he loved to speak. Well, the summer was going and the game grew more interesting by the day. Evening and afternoon I'd sulk beside the other man's car at the side of the house, while our masters fought it out with drawing-room swords within.

"The other car wasn't a bad sort; French, too, and a bright red. I had been blue when I made the voyage across, and it was because the girl happened to say that she hated blue one afternoon when we were on the way home from the clubhouse tea, that I made a quick journey to Southampton the next day and was fitted for my suit of gray."

"As if color made any difference," growled the Juggernaut. "That's the woman of it. Gears are the thing, and that's all there is to it."

The Gray Ghost made as if he had not heard. "I remember that she clapped her hands—very small but strong hands they were—when my master ran me up to the house the morning after I had come away from the garage tailor's. I tell you I *was* well groomed, if it is I that say it. 'Oh, you pretty, pretty car!' she exclaimed. 'Now I like

you.' And she ran upstairs, saying she must put on gray also and go for a ride with us at once. And she did, cutting an engagement with the other man. All of which was a clean point for my master, and I've been gray ever since and am likely to stay so.

"That was the woman of it, you see. My master had taken many pains for the girl—pains that caused him more trouble and heartache than his mere sending me to the painter, and yet she had paid him with only a little nod, or, sometimes, had laughed at him until the red had crept into his cheek. But now she clapped her hands and was genuinely pleased.

"It was very much the same way that she acted with the other man, I found out. The other man's car and I, although bound by loyalty to our masters to be not much more than civil toward one another, yet had a deal to say while we used to wait in the driveway. As for my red fellow, he thought it was an even thing between them for the girl, but believed, from what he had learned—the girl's rubber-tired runabout could talk our automobile language after a fashion—that the other man would win out in the end, because there were a great many things he had which my master hadn't—yachts and a town house, for example.

"We had the thing out together one evening when the red car slid into place beside me later than usual, badly scratched about the wheel guards.

"'One of my chauffeur nights,' he explained to me after his power had been shut off. 'They don't come very often down here, but they're something frequent and awful when we're in town.'"

"I endured one of those nights," said the black victoria, shudderingly. "I've been afraid of every new man in livery I've seen since."

"And then the worst of it is that our masters never know why we are tired the next morning," the yellow buckboard broke in. "It isn't so much the pace at which they drive us, although that pumps the life out of one's driving gear, but the mixed freight you've got to carry."

"Like the people from Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania," rumbled the Juggernaut.

"Very much like them, I fancy," said the gray car. "The butler, with a party of maids and, perhaps, a stableman, all of them with a bit too much dinner wine. It's a change—more than a change; it's a—as you Americans say—a 'come down' for a really respectable car."

"To say nothing of the dirty road-house barns you wait in while they're inside, pounding the piano and drinking beer," added a steam car from the shadows.

"With maybe a haphazard running amuck down Seventh Avenue through the park, with a policeman on a motor-cycle trying to catch up long enough to read your number and disgrace you by having you driven to the green lights of a station house," volunteered another machine.

"But the story. We are forgetting the story," murmured the victoria, anxiously, to the buckboard.

"It was anger over the racking he'd been put to that loosened the red car's tongue," the gray car went on. "Every time we met after that night we were more civil than we had been, and in time we both took a sort of sportsman-like interest in the race our masters were running, very much as if we were discussing a matter of road records. It was on a certain afternoon when we were neighbors on the turf by the gulf clubhouse—the everlasting sandwiches and tea being consumed inside—that he said to me: 'You'll be trying the gravel of other driveways pretty soon now. We've won out.'"

"Ah!" whispered the victoria.

"Of course I asked what he meant. 'They've fixed it all up—the girl and my master,' he said. 'They've arranged a honeymoon journey to town with me of a Thursday evening.'"

"'You mean they're going to cut and run—elope?' I asked him. And that's what they had done, according to him. It seems that the girl's people didn't like the other man, thought he was a bit off color and all that—and, to be frank, he

was. But, on the other hand, they didn't want the girl to fall in love with my master, because he wasn't even approximately rich. And, somehow, the girl had decided things for herself, and had made up her mind to run off with the other man—on Thursday, the red car said. It was to be a dash for an evening express train over the rolling country to Good Ground; the red car was to be left in the saloon stable across the road from the little station, and there would be a wedding the minute they'd crossed the Thirty-fourth Street ferry and a cab had whisked them off to a minister.

"You may imagine how I rattled on my way home that afternoon. The girl was with us, and it was a Tuesday. My master seemed a dolt, for even I could feel a different tone in her voice as she fluttered out of the tonneau and shook hands, without giving him a chance to climb down from the steering wheel.

"'Good-by, Tommie,' she said. 'It's been such a nice afternoon.'"

"She had never said 'Good-by' before. But he never noticed it.

"'To-morrow?' I heard him ask.

"'No, not to-morrow.'"

"'Thursday, then; these bully afternoons won't last long, you know.'"

"'No, I can't make it Thursday. I've a particularly pressing engagement for Thursday.'"

"'Well, then, Friday. You can't say 'no' to Friday?'"

"'All right, Friday—if I've not decided to go to town,' was the answer.

"My master laughed, little knowing that I was pitying him. 'Then the town is calling you, too?' he said. 'It's been calling me for weeks, the town and my business that's been going to the dogs.'"

"'Yes, the town is calling me,' repeated the girl. 'And, after all, it is so easy—going to the dogs. Sometimes, when one is badgered to death, anything seems like a welcome choice—even the dogs.'"

"'Look here, Madge,' he began. 'You've simply got to listen to me.'"

"'Oh, the pity of it, to feel him sitting still and fiddling with the wheel when

he should have been on the ground, persuading her to step back into the tonneau and begin a race for Good Ground and the evening express, forty-eight hours before the red car came to claim its precious freight.

"No, don't be silly, Tommie," the girl called back at him. Her feet were pattering upon the veranda then. And I fairly snorted as we made the turn and shot out into the fair road."

"That, as you said, was a Tuesday." It was the Juggernaut who interrupted, and the Gray Ghost began to speak again, slowly:

"That was a Tuesday. You may judge, my friends, of my state of mind. We did not journey toward the house of the many gables the next day, but we did travel many miles along unfamiliar roads, my master often halting me with a jerk that played hob with my nerves, and flinging himself out at intervals to tramp up and down under the trees, biting at his pipe savagely. And so it came Wednesday and Thursday."

"There wasn't any way of telling him, of course," the victoria remarked, half apologetically.

"No, there wasn't any way of telling him," said the gray car. "Our masters never know when we are trying to talk to them. I met that poor English torpedo car being dragged to a hospital shop the day after the train collision at Jamaica. 'It wasn't my fault,' he called, as my master halted to look the poor fellow over. 'I tried to tell them I was being pushed too fast to use my brake properly, but they only thought my piston-connecting rods were out of order, and began to tinker with my breathing.'"

"It was that way with me. 'Lord, but you're getting to be a noisy load of rails!' my master would say as he'd feel me all over and find nothing wrong. 'You're due for a stay at a Columbus Circle sanitarium when we get back to town.' And so it came Thursday morning and afternoon.

"After dinner—I was quite gloomy all by myself, with my thinking of the red car's triumph—I heard my master outside the shed, and then I shook with

joy until my gasoline bubbled, for I heard him tell the man to run me out. And when I saw him with evening clothes showing under his unbuttoned raincoat, I knew we were bidding defiance to the girl's orders; we were *not* waiting until Friday for our next visit.

"You may rely upon it that, if I ever rattled, I rattled for joy upon *that* journey. Perhaps, after all, I might have a word for the saying to my old acquaintance and rival, the red machine. In every race, you know, you will find the long shots, the cars that don't seem to have a chance; and they must be reckoned with sooner or later. But we were late, I feared, as the white road slipped beneath my tires, and it was bright moonlight as we slid into the familiar driveway.

"I was so bent upon making the turn to the steps neatly that I did not notice all that my master did. 'Hello!' I heard him say, as he reduced speed to a mere crawl. Then I saw why.

"Upon the long verandas there was being shown anything but properly conducted society tableaux. To begin with, there were two or three maids rushing about or bending over a rattan lounging seat near the door. You could make out the white of their cuffs and caps quite plainly; as I have said, it was very bright moonlight.

"At the foot of the steps stood a trap—the girl's trap—with a pair of grooms clumsily adjusting harness buckles; they evidently had driven out of the stables in hot haste, with only half their cords on. Fuming around them, now on this side and now on that, was the girl's father—hatless and a four-in-hand whip in his hand, which he must have caught up at random. As my wheels clutched to stop, I heard a sound from the rattan which I recognized, although the lounge was in shadow and I could not see. It was the girl's mother. And the girl's mother was, I regret to say, almost hysterical. So were the white-capped maids with the smelling bottles.

"The excited man with the whip fairly leaped toward us as we halted. I can tell you that even I was shaking

like one of those buck-jumping motors Fournier rides on race days, when it's stripped to the buff and is nothing but scrap steel pinned loosely together and packed full of explosive devils.

"Good God, Trevano!" he shouted. "You've come just in time. You must let me commandeer your car, and play chauffeur for me, too. There's the devil to pay."

"And again there was a wail from the rattan.

"I knew it all now. The jig was more than up. They'd bolted, with the red car singing a gasoline 'Lohengrin' as he scurried off with them to Good Ground.

"You mean?" said my master.

"It's Madge, Mr. Trevano. She's gone." The rattan occupant had dragged herself to one of the porch pillars, where she stood clinging, two maids hovering about her.

"With Farnsworth, the puppy!" burst out the girl's father. "Damn it! Will you grooms never have done? Take the trap back to the stables, anyway. We shan't need it now." And he started to climb in beside my master.

"When the latter spoke I hardly knew his voice. There was a thread of steel, cold steel, in it that wasn't exactly beautiful, although it was impressive.

"I don't think I quite understand what you wish me to do," said the voice.

"Do!" shouted the man with the whip. "You've got to help me catch them. They left a note, I tell you. It was just like Madge's careless impudence to flaunt the thing in our faces before they were safely off. She left a note to be given to her mother the moment Farnsworth and his infernal red machine had gone. She didn't try to throw dust in our eyes. There wasn't any need. It read straight enough. They're bound for Good Ground to make the evening express for New York, and a preacher who won't ask too many uncomfortable questions."

"I can't take you," replied my master. "I'll lend you my car if you like. But I can't go along."

"You've got to," shouted the other. "I can't run one of the devilish things;

never tried to. Man, it's my daughter's happiness that's at stake. Farnsworth's a puppy, you know that, don't you?"

"Yes, I'm quite aware of that," said my master.

"At this the drooping figure by the porch pillar collapsed again, and the maids drew her out of sight toward the rattan lounge.

"Hang you!" yelled the girl's father. He started to run toward the stables, to call back the trap, I fancy, but my master had leaped from his seat and laid hold of him.

"Listen to me," he said. "The deficiencies of existence have got to be looked to even if *everyone's* daughter runs off with a puppy. Some girls prefer puppies. You can't go with me, and you can't go alone. There's only one other thing left. And when you think it over, remember that every minute counts now. I know the road to Good Ground, and I know another short cut with some rough meadow work. If my car can cover it I'll start with a good five minutes' leeway, in spite of Farnsworth's lead."

"The old gentleman had sunk upon the lower step and was jabbering wildly now, and crying. He wasn't decorative. The transformation of rage into tears seldom is.

"If I go," said my master, "I'm going first of all for myself. That will give me the right. It will be a fair battle between Farnsworth and me, then. I'll go for the knowing that hereafter I'm to have an even show. You don't have to like me. But can't you see that I can't go unless I get a parent's commission? Of course it's taking advantage of a technicality. Even Farnsworth will know that. But it's the only way out of it—the only way I can interfere and not be a cad."

"The old fellow staggered to his feet. 'Go!' he fairly yelled. 'And curse you and Farnsworth both for a pair of housebreakers.'

"The last thing I heard as we sped out upon the road was the echo of moaning from the rattan lounge—"keen-ing," the only Irish chauffeur I ever knew used to call it.

"There we were upon an odd enough errand, and I shivered as I thought of that meadow cross-country hurdling—it was nothing else. I'd known more than one machine to try and take it, with wicked results. But this was not cups nor records. We were after a girl whose gray colors I wore, and the red car had her in his grip. The red car, perhaps more than any other thought, put a furious determination into my work. And we ate up the moonlit road eagerly."

"Ah, that is a story," whispered the black victoria to the yellow buckboard. There was an almost oppressive silence in the garage as the Gray Ghost proceeded:

"There's nothing to be gained by boasting of that cross-country work. Those of you who've ever taken part in a New Jersey motor-gymkana will know something about what it was like. I lurched out into the highway at the end of it, skidding over the slippery planks of a brook bridge that the county supervisors should have had repaired long ago. I was wrenched, and my tires were chipped a bit, but I was still as resolute as my master, whose steady hand I could feel upon my steering wheel. It makes a big difference in the way you take hills or bad turnpikes—the sort of grip that holds you true.

"A half mile beyond the clubhouse turn we halted. My master looked at his watch, nodded, as if satisfied, and then we moved slowly back, almost to the foot of the hill that slants fairly sheer, within sight of the straight road to the town. It was the ideal spot, one a real strategist would have chosen, no houses being within call, and the roadway not wide enough for two machines passing unless one of them swerved well out into the shrubbery filled rain gullies. There in the white moonlight we paused.

"Not for long; it was I who first heard them. Faintly, but none the less certainly, I heard the occasional snort of a car—the red car. And, finally, the breeze freshening a trifle and blowing it toward us, I made out the sharp, metallic lilt of my rival, singing a French

road song that, doubtless, he had learned from the same cars on the other side that I had. It is not an easy thing to translate it. The lines lose much of the color. But in English the burden would go something like this:

*Allons! the road. Highway yo-ho!
Tires that rasp and the flashing tonneau.
Fast flitting trees,
Cleft summer breeze.
Paris our journey's end. Thither we go."*

The Gray Ghost hummed the refrain in very much the same thin tone the red car must have used that night, hallooing over the Shinnecock hills. Every car within hearing thrilled. Even the old Juggernaut creaked approval. As for the black victoria, she murmured ecstatically to her neighbor.

"No French car sings that song unless he is feeling gay and confident. The motors whose masters have won at the races chant it together while slipping homeward. The machines who do not carry winners plod along silently. I knew the red car was in fine feather. Little he recked of us.

"My master leaned forward, pushed the black lids across my two acetylene eyes; and there we waited until the others should slow up to descend the hill. As it turned out, they fancied themselves safe enough from pursuit, and were coming along very evenly. What shadows were cast by the scrub pines lay wrapped about us, and when we saw them *we* must have been quite unseen, even if the red car's occupants had been looking for interference.

"When the machine—it looked black in the moon haze—was cleanly outlined above us, my master shot on the power, my eyes winked again and we moved fair out in the center of the roadway.

"*"Paris our journey's end. Thither we go,"* I spat toward my rival—my enemy now. He heard me, if the girl and the man did not. Then I marked the brakes go on hard at the crest.

"*"Hello, ahead!"* the other man called. *"Give us room to pass, will you?"* We had moved forward now until there was not more than a rod or two between us. I know that I had to strain

with my rear tires to keep from slipping.

"Then there came a cry—from the girl. She had first followed the red car in knowing. And a second later came the man's voice in an ugly growl. Things were so still that we might have talked as we would have done across a dinner table. 'Whose car is that?' asked the man. But he knew already.

"Oh, Tommie Trevano!" wailed the girl. And I saw that she was not on the driving seat beside Farnsworth, but behind.

"I know this isn't Friday, Madge," remarked my master. 'But I came for a reason. Practical jokes often look rather unpleasant the morning after, you know.'

"For the last time, are you going to give us room?" asked Farnsworth.

"Do you wish Miss Merridale to return in my car or your own?" inquired my master in turn.

"How did you do it, you steeplechase elephant?" sneered the red car at me between puffs.

"Never mind," said I, feeling my wrenched wheels. 'It isn't all over yet.'

"And it wasn't. The girl in her gray dust veil—an odd color, *ours*, to wear for a runaway in a red car, I thought—leaned across the other man's shoulder and put a hand upon his arm pleadingly.

"No, I won't," he snarled. 'We're going on, if we have to run him down.'

"That was all, save for a real scream of alarm from the girl. I knew in an instant what was coming. The red machine was a spitting demon as he charged down upon us with a howl of released wheel clutches. But my master was not backward, and gave me my head in time.

"Well, I knew the weak spot of those red cars—amidships, among the slender driving rods—and with a final, awful tugging of my strained gears I met them—met them well.

"In the hideous grind of metal, the tinkling of splintered lamps and the bruising crash against my outer plates. I kept my footing, a car stricken and with the blind staggers, but worthy of

my master, who had sprung clear and was among the bushes beyond the spilled red car, whose upturned wheels were churning wildly until there was a crack and one or two despairing wheezes.

"I'm through," groaned my rival. And so he was.

"Pretty soon a bundle of gray was placed within my keeping. My master stood beside me, listening to the girl sobbing among the cushions.

"Heaven forgive me if I've hurt more than your heart this night," he kept saying.

"I don't think you've hurt even that," said the girl, after a while. 'And, oh, Tommie, it *wouldn't* have looked pretty in to-morrow's papers, and, anyway, it was a terrible mistake.'

"You mean that you are going to quite forgive me?"

"Maybe I mean something more than that—maybe I mean something that I've never been sure of until now."

"The girl's voice somehow seemed gray, like her veil—colorless, but with the lack of color that comes not from untruthfulness, but from the fear of letting the hues of quick joy flash out too brightly.

"As for my master, he made a quick step toward the tonneau, but checked himself and whirled on his heel.

"She stretched out her arms to him—she seemed very weak and helpless, sitting there in the moonlight, while St. George strode off past his slain dragon, a red one with gasoline insides this time.

"Tommie! You *aren't* going to leave me?"

"I'd be the cad I was afraid you'd think me, if I pressed my advantage now, with him lying stunned over yonder," said my master. Whereat the figure in gray crumpled up on my cushions again."

"But you carried the other man home?" It was a timid question that came tremulously from the black victoria despite her.

"The bent plates I wear have never been touched," said the Gray Ghost, slowly. It was as if his story-telling

mood were over, and he had turned to the silent remembering of things. "And as for the other man——"

There was a grating noise as the garage door slid back. A man and a girl, the latter slim and wrapped in an opera cloak, entered, while a leather-coated chauffeur who followed them touched a button, causing an incandescent bunch-light to reveal the huddled group of motors, the old sightseeing car a huge bulk by the rear wall.

Swiftly the *mecanicien* trundled the Gray Ghost toward the runway, and the man placed the girl in the tonneau. "You drive us home, Henri," he said.

The girl patted the cushion beside her. "It's a dear car, Tommie. I don't want you ever to buy me another," she said.

The man laughed, and the Gray Ghost, edging away to clear his rear wheels, chuckled gently back to his

companions, "Do you hear, *mes amis*?" Then with a crackling slide he was off, lost in the avenue lamp blur.

There was a hum and a rattle from the motors as several other chauffeurs entered the garage to see that their cars were ready for their masters.

"Do you suppose," began the black victoria to the yellow buckboard—"do you suppose——"

"Ho! ho!" rumbled the Juggernaut. "And so they were married—like the people from Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania."

"The rats must be busy in that old rubberneck coach again," said one of the leather-coated men, wiping his fingers after an exploration among his dim gears. "There's hardly a cushion left that they haven't chewed to rags."

"And so they were married," said the Juggernaut, with a final rumble. "Married."



THE JOURNEY

THE wind of the day blows downward
From the moor and the far lone height,
And sinks to rest on the brooding breast
Of the hushed and mothering night.

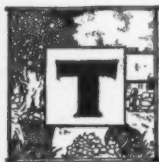
The river sweeps from the mountain
To find its peace in the sea;
But, oh, my heart, thou must yearn on
To all eternity.

Restless, unsatisfied, longing,
Evermore doomed to roam;
For thou hast gone on a journey long
To those hills of the soul's far home.

W. WILFRED CAMPBELL.

THE SOCIAL POWER OF AMBASSADORS

B. & J.
JULIEN
GORDON



THE rules reported to have been formulated by one of our ambassadors concerning the matter of social preferment among Americans in European society are likely to be

the cause of considerable debate among those people most affected by them. Already there are signs of agitation.

The panic among American newspaper correspondents as to whether our embassies are to draw a line of ostracism, and receive and entertain only those persons who are "in the swim" of New York, Newport, Boston or Philadelphia, must amuse Europeans and some Americans.

The Honorable John W. Foster, the veteran diplomat and statesman, would practically wipe out not only all grades of diplomatic representation, but, it is to be believed from his utterances, all embassies of any sort. Like many others, he is, no doubt, of the opinion that in these days of rapid communication by cable, etc., ambassadors are a superfluous commodity; that, if ornamental, which is rare, they are at least useless.

This is, of course, a matter of opinion. Ambassadorial consequence always remains a marvel, and appears to waken peculiar antagonism in the provincial souls of Western and Southern congressmen and senators. Nevertheless, if these gentlemen themselves are offered a legation, we find that they do not decline it. We charitably infer that this change of base, this apparent inconsistency, is due to their gentle re-

gard for the social ambitions of their wives and daughters.

It is a known fact that but few of our representatives abroad are persons of any antecedents or tradition. They are—in these days when wealthy display is necessary to keep up any permanent prestige—usually recruited from the ranks of the new, or one generation, rich. Men of brains, no doubt, on their own lines; of brawn, push and eager aspiration. Like all parvenus, these men and their womenkind are chary of their freshly acquired position, and are, therefore, loath to jeopardize it by any catholicity in the matter of their drawing rooms.

We confess that the crowd received at their Fourth of July or New Year's "functions" may be a trifle dispiriting to their inflamed dreams of social supremacy. The question is: "*Que faites-vous?*" These tiresome, nomadic Americans, who were their pals once and are now their inferiors—what is to be done with them? Would not a speedy recall follow a too tight closing of embassy portals? This is why the two or three national fêtes are particularly welcome, enabling our representatives abroad, at small trouble and expense, to let in the "rabble"—so one once prudently named it in my hearing. They can keep this element out and be more exclusive the rest of the year. Yet, after all, what does this exclusiveness serve, and whom?

We are amazingly over-secure of our own importance in Europe. What do these people care for the petty spats, rivalries and bickerings of a handful of aliens? Does the Duchesse d'Uzès

even know who our ambassador in Paris is? Does the Duke of Devonshire care if he be a well fed parvenu or a starving *savant*? Why, for that matter, President Roosevelt is the first of our rulers who has ever acquired any European prestige. In parenthesis, the other day, in his wife's drawing room, a distinguished English diplomatist, who has been ambassador at various continental courts, asked me if McKinley had ever reached the presidency. I could not fathom if this question was the result of ignorance or of impending senility. I answered: "Never. He died in bed of indigestion produced by his disappointment." To which the gentleman, who did much to render my visit in London agreeable, replied: "Ah!"

In speaking of Americans, let us quote *Vanity Fair*:

They entertain with an originality and *entrain*, and, above all, a splendid disregard of money, which our sadly handicapped aristocracy cannot afford to imitate. Here let it be said that although the American is popularly supposed to possess, above all others, the gift of assimilability, and to be able to turn herself into such an admirable imitation of a French woman, a German or an Italian as to be almost indistinguishable from the real thing, never does she become an English woman, in spite of—or is it, perhaps, because of?—the kinship existing between the two nations. Indeed, it is asserted by some that she is managing to turn her English sister into a not very satisfactory imitation of herself. Of late years we have learned many little things from the Americans—in fact, the big daughter across the Atlantic has, in approved modern style, shown a distinct inclination to teach her small mother the way she should go.

When in London recently I myself heard among a bevy of smart English girls one, slanting her hat at an eccentric angle before the mirror, exclaim—quite without humor, quite gravely, but with exultation—"I think this way I almost look like an American." And the chorus commended her effort. It is true that in Europe American women are now imitated, because they are supposed to be the most alluring creatures in the world, and the most chic.

When our ambassadors have not been

parvenus, they have sometimes been scholars. We have vaunted this as proving that we are not a nation of snobs. But there are scholars and scholars. The fact that a man has written a treatise on economics, finance, law or irrigation does not necessarily fit him to grace the palaces of princes.

An elegant, distinguished woman, one of those clever Americans who always behave like beauties, even if they are not, a resident of Rome, once called upon one of these *savant* diplomats on a matter of urgent affairs. She found the erudite recluse—who had not learned, with all his knowledge, that material beauty and grace liberate, rest from mental obsession—sitting in his shirt sleeves in a very shabby room. His chair was tilted back from his desk, his pot hat pushed back from his forehead, and he was rhythmically spitting at a distant hearth with conscientious regularity. He did not rise upon her entrance, continuing to tilt and spit. What could this man, who was the laughing-stock of the Italian court, where his solecisms were the object of ridicule, do for this lady or any other lady? Hers was a salon, not a restaurant. The best of the Roman aristocracy danced at her parties. She was received in their most fastidious society, not because of her embassy, but in spite of it. It is obvious she did not ask its favors.

When I was presented at the Russian court, there was an American woman in St. Petersburg, a woman of letters, whose intellectual attainments had attracted the attention and friendship of many important Russians. She desired the same honor. It was refused to her on the tactful grounds that her Boston ancestry was not of sufficiently *fine fleur*! She was a woman of spirit, and told me she would be presented, in any case. And it came to pass that Prince Dolgorouky was, indeed, forced to see to it that she made her courtesy, in spite of the embargo of her ambassador. A lady of the court espoused her cause, and she snapped her fingers merrily in the face of her native sponsors.

The American embassies abroad are dull places enough, and persons who have any claim to social recognition are usually glad to avoid them.

I remember the naïve daughter of one of our ambassadors to France said to me at a dinner party: "I should enjoy Paris so much if I only could meet some nice French people." A laugh ran about the table. The situation in France is certainly strained and distinctly difficult. The republican coterie is despised and ridiculed by the fashionable; yet it is often the only one met at our embassy, which, by once receiving an Orleans prince with unusual honor, came near causing a *casus belli*.

How inexperienced indeed are our diplomats and their spouses! How careless and unconventional are their methods! Persons of national prominence have been known to leave cards at our embassies as a usual matter of etiquette. They have been ignored or not returned for weeks; no kindness shown, no courtesy extended; the commonest rules of politeness neglected. At the English, French, Spanish or Italian embassies a card would invariably be returned within twenty-four hours; a letter of introduction honored by an invitation within forty-eight. There are special secretaries to attend to such duties. Not long ago a near and valued relative of our President's was rudely treated in a foreign city by the minister's wife. The American wife of a foreign ambassador elected to give a dinner party on the day after the assassination of a powerful sovereign. Her husband in vain represented to her that it might cost him his career. She would not listen. She was valiantly determined to run a little republic of her own. This act laid the first seed of a discord which flowered eventually in the divorce courts.

I should recommend Americans intent upon a sojourn in Europe to take good letters. With these *entrées* is as-

sured. Their embassy can and will do little either to help or to hinder their progress. If its beneficiaries are agreeable people, it is well to meet them as such, but to make light of their undue pretensions and sail safely over their *fiat*.

Money remains the principal talisman which enables unknown Americans to succeed—anywhere. Given plenty of that and comely daughters, Europeans, still inclined to think us all "*canaille*"—poor, deluded, incompetent, complacent creatures that they are—will open wide their doors. They are bored and in want of amusement. They are dull and in want of enlivenment. They are hard up and in want of "*dots*." How can any American ambassador supply all these requisites? How can he extinguish the man who gives great ladies points in Wall Street; shove away the pretty girl who has five millions in each pocket? The English great lady will simply raise her lorgnon and, looking across the room, ask, vacantly: "Who is this man?"

King Edward has the address to flatter and to play with Americans. He is astute enough to have gauged his own limitations. He has always had the wit to use his special gift—the social one—for all it was worth. His complaisance has turned the heads of one or two of our envoys, ingenuous enough to imagine that political policy meant personal predilection. For ingenuous they are! They have less humor than they think! The king's ephemeral civilities mean very little. And could they but hear what some of their hosts and hostesses say of them! Whatever they may attempt, they are not powerful enough to make friends or enemies for the aspirants to social notice, especially in London, where the exact value of royal amiability is smiled at and understood. They cannot impose their compatriots and they will not crush them. The Europeans will attend to their own visiting lists.

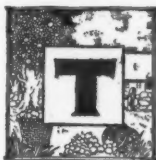




CONVERSATIONS WITH EGERIA

THE FEMININE INTELLECT

by MRS. WILSON WOODROW



HE judge glanced furtively about him. "I am flying," he said, "from an intellectual lady. Please rescue me."

"Thank you," said Egeria. "Let me express my appreciation of your delicate skill in handling a two-edged weapon."

The judge ignored the retort courteously. "A woman never seems able to take her intellect sanely," he continued, gloomily. "If such gifts as great beauty and transcendent virtue become obnoxious when they are vaunted by their possessors, then how much more objectionable is intellectual vainglory? A woman affects to take her beauty meekly—a poor thing, but mine own; she is regarded with suspicion if she prate of her virtue; but of her brain she makes a pageant."

"Ah," remarked Egeria, with languor, "and I dare say you hold to those rococo views so thoroughly incorporated in the thirty-nine articles of man's creed, that a woman's mentality is always in inverse ratio to her powers of attraction."

The judge refused to answer a direct question. "I don't care how much intellect she has," he insisted, stoutly. "I only ask that she doesn't flaunt it in my face, and ask me to sit an admiring and applauding audience while she puts it through its paces. It's not her possession of it that I object to; it's her self-consciousness about it. She never ignores it or allows it to go and sit quietly in the corner. It is always in evidence."

"In a way you are right," admitted

Egeria, reluctantly. "I wonder why it is. I know quantities of clever men; but they rarely seem to regard themselves as 'We are the people, knowledge shall die with us.' They are apt to prate to you enthusiastically and endlessly of some new and rather boyish hobby. For instance, there is a man whose achievements in a particular line have made him a great figure; now he finds his rest and recreation in painting atrocious pictures. Of his important and interesting work he rarely speaks; but he will descant endlessly upon the merits of those abominable pictures, and exhibit them with a naïve and child-like pride."

"But," asked the judge, quickly, "did you ever know a woman lawyer or actress or writer or mathematician who would forego all mention of her life-work to discourse joyously on the making of buttonholes?"

"It is so short a time that women have been credited with an ability to think"—Egeria spoke dryly—"that they naturally like to air their accomplishments."

"There should be an especial handbook issued for them," advised the judge—"How Not to Be a Bore." And why are they so plain? Is nature so niggardly that she will not dower a woman with brains and beauty at the same time, or is there a fierce, devastating microbe of the intellect which devours all the germs of latent loveliness?"

"I admit"—there was a deluding fairness in Egeria's tones—"that there are few things more difficult to endure than the learned and complacent young person didactic and anxious to bestow

information; nor do I wonder in the least that men prefer a soft, adorable, fluffy little fool. But middle age stares every woman in the face. Kittenhood is bewitching, but old-cathood is a very different matter, and I maintain that in middle life the most tiresome and pedantic of intellectual women is preferable to those fat, flabby, bejeweled creatures one so frequently sees dining or driving. They are the unprogressive, overfed wives of rich men; like the lilies of the field, they toil not, neither spin, and unlike them they take vast thought of what they shall eat and what they shall drink, and wherewithal they shall be clothed. They remind one of nothing so much as wheezy pug dogs lolling in silken baskets, and, appropriately enough, they are usually accompanied by a pampered little beast, their prototype and *alter ego*. They cannot talk—the women, not the dogs—they cannot think, there are only two things they can do—eat and drink, and spend money. I am sure that one tiny thought which had a premise and certain conclusions to be deduced from it would cause inflammation of the brain.

"You men are so fond of catch phrases, and attach so much importance to them"—Egeria was now in full cry—"that when I hear you talk of a man's ideal being 'the old sweet, womanly woman of the long ago,' I long to drag a heroine from the pages of an eighteenth century novel and throw her on your hands for a season. She with her pleasing habits of bursting into tears or fainting on every occasion! She with her missish, mawkish sentimentality and her everlasting 'sensibility'! How glad he would be to exchange her for the twentieth-century girl, with her splendid health; the girl who can play golf or tennis, or ride or swim with him; who can listen understandingly when he talks of the events of the hour or of his business! This is the era of companionship; for the first time men and women are comrades."

"H'm-m!" sniffed the judge. "I get very tired of those bright, boyish young women. The only difference, it sometimes seems to me, between the young

collegians of both sexes, is that some wear trousers and some petticoats. When man desires mental stimulus he turns to his own kind. The potent spell of the eternal feminine, Madame Egeria, is to be eternally feminine. Like does not attract like. Our opposites fascinate us. The pine, you remember, loved the palm—the graceful, sensuous Southern palm. The instructive woman, who with serene complacency has taken all knowledge for her province, should have a millstone tied about her neck and be cast into the depths of the sea. A woman's initial duty is to please."

"But not to try to please," averred Egeria, *sotto voce*.

"What's the difference?" asked the judge, obtusely.

"Great heavens! Don't you know the difference between the woman who pleases you without trying and the woman who tries without pleasing you?"

"I can stand any type of woman better than the unnaturally sprightly ones—the artificially animated ones with the dull eyes, you know, who ask you if you've read this book or that—all the books, in fact, that you've never heard of; and who tell funny stories very badly indeed."

"Do you think they are quite as hard to bear"—a pensiveness had crept into Egeria's tone—"as the ones who murmur on and on, 'And I was quite sure that Bobby—Bobby's my oldest boy, you know—had fallen downstairs and killed himself, so I said to Mr. Smith, who was sitting by the fire reading the evening paper—no, it was Browning's poems; and he wasn't by the fire, either; he was sitting near the window—and I said to him, 'Do you know, dear, I believe Bobby has fallen downstairs and killed himself.' And he said, 'Why, no, darling, I do not think so. I'm quite sure I heard him whistling outside just a moment ago.' And I said, 'No, dear; I think you are mistaken.' And he said, 'No, Mary, love, I'm quite positive of what I'm saying.' And I said, 'But, husband dearest, I'm as sure as I can be.''"

The judge was grinding his teeth horribly. "Oh, please stop!" he begged. "I can't bear it. I've heard them purl on that way for hours. Do not recall those moments in Hades."

"But that is the type of woman you particularly admire," Egeria spoke with soft malice. "No one would accuse her of any intellectual luggage, no matter how carefully concealed."

The judge gazed abstractedly through the window. "I don't believe," he said at last, doggedly and daringly, but still having the grace to avert his eyes—"I don't believe that you've got anything worth being called an intellect, and I think that you're all intuitively and subconsciously aware of the fact, from the way you parade any spurious imitations you may possess."

Egeria sat bolt upright, with two scarlet spots blazing on her cheeks. "Where are Jove's lightnings?" she cried, gazing eagerly at the ceiling. "Why don't they fall and frizzle you to a smoking cinder?"

"To possess an intellect," insisted the judge, "presupposes the logical faculty. Woman is never logical."

"She doesn't have to be," asserted Egeria, triumphantly. "She knows a trick worth two of that. She watches man go through all those elaborate mental contortions of which he is so fond, and which he calls 'logical methods of reasoning and deduction,' and then she exclaims, with Emerson, 'Why all these painful labors? There is a better way.' Let him amuse himself with so cumbersome and old-fashioned a vehicle if he wishes, but my swift intuitions supply me with an infallible and instantaneous conclusion."

"Infallible!" scoffed the judge. He looked unutterable things, but checked his rising speech. "Your intellectual woman takes herself so seriously"—harking back to his original grievance.

"She does, rather," admitted Egeria, with the generosity of one who feels that he has scored. "She's always studying things out of books, when life stands at the door of her tent and offers her an interesting panorama. Love points to his primrose way, Sorrow

beckons, Joy woos and she scowls at her: 'Out of my path, light one. I have no time to heed any of you, or to pay the price of admission to your exhibits. I am cultivating my intellect.'"

"You mean gathering grapes of thorns and figs of thistles," muttered the judge.

"You see, she forgets that 'no perfect artist was created yet of an imperfect woman,'" apologized Egeria.

"Was a perfect artist ever created of any kind of a woman? Is woman ever truly an artist at all in the higher sense?" The judge had the bit in his teeth now. "When she achieves anything in art, she usually does so in a way that appears in curious contradiction to her sex. Her work, when it exhibits any power at all, is apt to be oddly virile and unimaginative. However, I must except one branch of art—women are great actresses; and the reason is that they are never called upon to speak the universal voice. They merely express their sex. There has never been a woman musician of the highest rank. Oh, I grant you there are a few charming ones; but none great. Rosa Bonheur is the greatest woman painter, a wonderful observer, with no hint of that mystic vision which seems a part of the gift of supreme artists."

"As novelists, women have gone far. George Eliot is perhaps the most notable example. Fielding outclasses her."

"What would you say of Mrs. Browning's 'Sonnets from the Portuguese'?" asked Egeria, coldly.

"The final dictum will probably be that they are the most artistic thing a woman has ever accomplished," he replied. "But stop to think of woman's perversity." The judge spoke as if personally injured. "Women have chosen to excel in fields where it would seem there was no possible show for them. Women have been mighty rulers, diplomats and politicians. When did the traditional heart of woman ever interfere with the crafty head of Elizabeth of England, Catherine of Russia, the present Empress of China? Of Catherine it was said that she com-

bined all the resources of the implacable ruler, the trained diplomat, the profound psychologist and the woman of fascination. Elizabeth was almost a like deadly combination. She never made a mistake in a man, and she surrounded herself with advisers who could make herself and her kingdom glorious. Her political coquetties still hold lessons for diplomats.

"Then, women are sometimes magnificent organizers. Notable modern examples are Clara Barton, Frances Willard and Mrs. Eddy. Among those not of her cult, the name of the latter is usually greeted with a smile of derision, but from the marvelously simple, yet absolutely effective, organization of her church, Rome itself might take a lesson.

"Women may be eminent in mathematics, in science. They have shown, and do show, signs of this in their past and present mental development; but if the signs of the past and the present mean anything, men will continue to hold the laurel in art against all feminine comers. Your sex, Madame Egeria, will give to the world echoes of the 'blue tide's low susurrus, which steals to the ivory gates.' But will

women ever pass and repass through those shining gates, free citizens of the world of dreams? I doubt it. The feminine nature lacks something of the requisite emotional depth and range. George Sand could never have loved Chopin as Chopin loved George Sand."

"Pouf!" Egeria rose to her feet. "One of the prime amusements of man, even since he was a chattering monkey in a treetop, has been to harangue on the destiny of woman and set the limits to her achievement. He constructs a neat cage and puts her within it. Then he exclaims, admiringly, 'Behold the caged tiger!' And woman paces up and down the cage until she gets tired of it; then she lifts her paw, strikes out a few bars and walks free. Immediately man sits down and prophesies long and loud of the horrible things that will happen to her and to the race if she is not immediately captured and thrust back into a stronger cage of his devising. You amuse me"—walking away a few paces—"but you fail to convince."

"You remember George Meredith's words," called the judge, just before she was out of earshot, "that 'woman is the last creature man shall civilize.'"



BEYOND THE SEAS

O LOVE, albeit the wide, unresting seas
 Dissever us, I feel, despite the space,
 The vernal, dawn-like glamour of your grace,
 Your manifold and subtle witcheries!
 Your voice speaks softly in the lilting breeze;
 Each blossom shows some feature of your face;
 There's naught of beauty but reveals a trace
 Of you whose loveliness is mine heart's-ease.

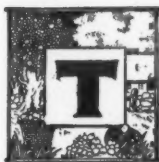
But 'tis at twilight that you seem most near,
 Stealing from out the purple shadow-land,
 What time Love's star, a radiant, roseate sphere,
 Leads up the western sky the planet band;
 Then in a dream—oh, dream divinely dear!—
 I know the lingering rapture of your hand!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

The JOURNALISTS



By
Joseph
Blethen



HE faint heralding of dawn gave way to full daylight with the suddenness of an explosion, the sun pushing a crimson rim out of the limitless plain, just as a round-faced

man might peep over a wall. The flood of gold swept the sky, springing westward across the tops of the great circle of Indian tepees in The-Camp - of - the - Summer - Feast, and splashing against the huge Rockies beyond. On the very instant the low, distant breath of a locomotive whistle crept softly through the senses of the awakening encampment: "*Wah-h-h-h! Wah-h-h-h! Wah! Wah!*" Then still! Oh, so calm and still!

Draw deep this sense of security with the breath of morning, O white guest. That screeching fire *travaux* of the whites can get no closer. Such a lazy thing, that steam *travaux*! It never climbs hills, but turns aside to crawl around them. Such a coward! Clinging to creek beds and ravines till it has to cross the open; then fleeing across screeching to scare away even the harmless cattle. It never leaves the trail made for it; that trail of hurry-hurry that goes eastward and westward. It cannot come here, for this camp is on the trail of As-It-Was. You are safe, O white guest! There! Hear it? Deep-toned, distant, it has passed along the edge of As-It-Is: "*Wah-h-h-h! Wah-h-h-h! Wah! Wah!*"

A flash from the Sun-Eye, peeping boldly over the wall into As-It-Was, struck through the tepee flaps and burned on the drowsy one's lids. A

voice resounded in his ears. The beat of a pony's hoofs jarred the plain near where he lay. Scarce time to open one's eyes, and here was the morning newsman of The-Camp - of-the-Summer-Feast riding around on his pony and making the announcements of the day; scarce time to boil the white man's coffee, and the lodges of three thousand Indians were ringing with shout and jest. They were but three thousand children at a big kindergarten, and that kindergarten gone camping out!

The herald reined in his pony before the guest lodge and called out in Sioux: "Awake, white guest! The daughters of Chief Red Cloud are coming with the guest breakfast. Hasten, or they will find you in your blankets. Hasten, for there is much to do to-day. Blue Bird, daughter of Chief Stone Man, will receive her maiden friends at high sun to-day in the medicine lodge of the Dakotas. Listen to the message of Stone Man: You, white guest, and all young men, are invited to be present at this feast of the maidens. If you know aught against anyone who presents herself, speak, that the pure ones may not be deceived by her presence. But beware of evil tongue and jealous hearts. Stone Man will be unmerciful to any youth who speaks falsely of a worthy maid at this sacred feast. Get up, you lazy white man! Are you a cat, to sleep by day? Calling Water came in last night with his band. There are many for you to get before the picture box to-day. And Sun Hair, the daughter of the missionary at the post, came last night. She is a white child whom we love. She is the sun that has drawn this sleepy white guest here.

Ho! what a lover is he to sleep while she is up at this hour. Bestir yourself, white guest, lest Sun Hair's lover be named Sleepy Heart!"

The white guest, who had never before been on the trail of As-It-Was, sat up in his blankets. He could understand nothing of the herald's message. His white man companion, a photographer, honorary and adopted member of the tribe, who had stood in the entrance to greet the herald, understood, laughed heartily and called back:

"All right, Straight Talk; you are the best alarm clock I know. You've got him up, all right."

"Tell him he owes me a cigar," replied Straight Talk, in plain English, that the white guest might understand. Then he turned his pony away to resume his rounds as the official morning newsman.

"Why, I didn't know he could talk English!" exclaimed the white guest, in surprise.

"Many of them know enough English to make you uncomfortable, if they take the notion," replied the photographer. "Old Straight Talk has a Carlisle diploma in his lodge, but the office of herald descended to him, and he has returned to the camp life to fulfill it. Tumble out here and get a good look at him. You consider yourself an up-to-date editor; well, that red chap is your primeval ancestor. If you look closely you will see some traits that your tribe has never outgrown, nor never will."

Mr. Will Teller, editor, author, clubman and good fellow in Plains City, white guest at The-Camp-of-the-Summer-Feast, stepped out of the guest lodge and looked at the herald, who sat on his pony two lodges away, announcing again the day's program.

"I see nothing but a rather slouchy, out-at-the-knees Indian, on a four-dollar cayuse," said Teller.

"Did you ever know a poverty-stricken editor who was ready to quit his trade?" retorted the photographer. "Just look at the flashing eye and the sweep of that arm. You certainly

would think that the news he had to tell was important. Those gestures are headlines. First-page story! Can't a red journalist be as yellow as a white one?"

Teller laughed quietly at the thrust. He was beginning to understand. Here was the native conceit of the-one-who-tells-what-is-doing; here was the thrill of telling; here was the conscious pose of journalistic importance.

"He matches your modern daily newspaper in everything you do," said the photographer.

"Advertising patronage, for instance?" asked Teller, his tone inferring a doubt.

"Just the same," said the photographer. "Stone Man pays him for announcing his daughter's feast. He told me just now that Calling Water's band came in last night. By and by he will go to Calling Water and collect for advertising his arrival. Births, deaths, marriages, feasts—all such things come under the head of paid matter with him."

"Really! I had no such idea," acknowledged Teller. "All he lacks is an editorial page."

"He has that, too. You should hear him haranguing around the camp on the day of choosing the director of games. Study him. You will find that your modern self is in everything he does, and that everything he does still abides with you. Before you have been here two days you will be getting a pony and riding around telling the news."

Teller was becoming more and more interested. Get a pony and tell the news? Why not? If he belonged to the tribe of journalists, why not assume his part in the camp life? But not on a pony. That was old-fashioned. Get a lodge, get an interpreter, set up shop and apply modern methods to an ancient custom. Get a lodge where all should come to hear news told after modern methods; embellished news, clever insinuations, editorial news on the situation; stories, features, interviews, *yellow!* The conceit of the journalist flared in him as he thought;

the zest of rivaling old Straight Talk moved him. Will Teller was schooled in the most approved metropolitan methods; Straight Talk knew only the tricks of an inherited tribal custom. Besides, there was Miss Lillian Ladue, the blond daughter of the missionary, whom the Indians called Sun Hair. May not a white lover be as eager as a red one to excel in the presence of the one maid?

Teller ate in silence the breakfast which was brought by the two shy, diffident Indian girls: straight, lithe, laughing, bronze creatures who could lift the thin, office-broken white man from the ground and hold him above their heads on one flattened palm, yet who, in the conscious droop of the eyes, in the quick advance and retreat of coquetry, in the rounded beauty-mask on limbs of steel, and in the delicate regard for appearances, betrayed the stamp and flavor of nature's sweetest treasure—maidenhood. This glimpse of Indian domesticity made the camp suddenly human to him. He wanted to be somebody among them, and at once he sought out Straight Talk. The lodge of the herald was easily found. Its sign, painted over the entrance, was significant. A sun high in the sky signified publicity, through the banishment of all secrets; an Indian eating out of a full dish signified that the newsman was no beggar, but a man whose services could be had only for a fair remuneration. Teller offered Straight Talk a dollar to go about and announce that he desired to rent a large tent for the week.

"I will pay you ten dollars for the use of the tent," said Teller.

"You are a guest," replied Straight Talk. "You have but to ask."

"But this is a matter of business," said Teller. "You might as well announce for me that I am to start a news lodge. I need a tent and an interpreter. I expect to make a profit, so I will pay for both."

Straight Talk smiled. "You are going to be a herald? All you need is a pony. I have several. You may choose."

"But you do not understand," said Teller, smiling. "I am going to run you out of business during the time of this encampment. Be a rival, don't you see? All in fun, like a horse race, you know. I am going to give the camp the news in an up-to-date way. They will come to my tent and pay to get in. Then I'll tell them my news."

"Good game," said Straight Talk, his own eyes lighting.

"Oh, but it hits you hard," urged Teller. "For the remainder of this encampment you will have to make your living by telling stories to the children, and running errands for the old women. You cannot hope to equal modern journalism."

The Indian looked calmly at the white man. "You may play any game you like. You are a guest. But do not boast. I am the herald. I have the office from my father, as he had it from his. You cannot change it. Play your game, but do not boast."

Teller had a moment of hesitation, but the thought of hiring the tribal herald to announce the starting of a rival lodge was tempting. "Go ahead, please," said he. "Say that I want a lodge and an interpreter, and that I am going to become a new kind of herald."

The Indian smiled again, and there was a glint in his eye. "One dollar for asking for a lodge is enough. Another dollar for the interpreter is enough. But to announce a rival herald is unusual. That will cost you five dollars."

The end and aim of modern journalism is to make profit; yet wherein it could improve upon this, Mr. Will Teller could not see. As he stood watching Straight Talk, mounted on his calico pony, go around the great circle of lodges faithfully delivering his message, he felt a certain proprietorship in that seven-dollar extra edition.

Slow Dog, ex-policeman, ex-student, ex-everything, a failure in all save a native ability to make trouble, had long yearned to hold Straight Talk's office. Twice he had tried it, with the conceit

of all chronic failures that journalism is easy. Twice he had failed, for Straight Talk's birthright was like a franchise. The tribal herald, only, might go ex-officio to the council lodge and hear the debates; he, only, might tell the news ex-officio, and, in the same breath, comment on it. So now Slow Dog hastened to become Teller's interpreter, hoping thereby to become a herald.

Straight Talk's pony came pattering back to the guest lodge. "I have found you a tent," said the herald. "Calling Water, who came in last night with his band, has a large army tent that he will not use. You are welcome to it."

Teller employed three young men at a dollar each to erect the proffered tent in a conspicuous place close to the guest lodge. He went to Chief Calling Water to pay for its use. The old chief knew no English, and summoned Willow Blossom, his daughter, the acknowledged belle of the tribe, to become interpreter.

"I propose to establish a herald tent," said Teller. "People will come to me to hear the news. Slow Dog will be my reader. I shall charge something for admittance. It is only right for me to pay Chief Calling Water for the use of his tent."

The old chief smiled when his daughter, not once lifting her eyes in the presence of his guest, interpreted the message. "Tell him," said he to his child, "that he can admit Chief Calling Water and all who dwell in his lodge freely to hear the news."

"A complimentary copy at the very start," thought Teller. "Even the deadhead has an ancestor."

A sign over the new herald lodge was necessary. Slow Dog could paint, but he advised the employment of Blue Thunder, a medicine man. Blue Thunder was paid two dollars for painting a sign on a strip of old canvas to be hung above the entrance. Slow Dog received fifty cents of this as commission. When completed, the drawing was a representation of a yellow man mounted on a black cavalry horse and pursuing a much dilapidated red In-

dian who was fleeing on a pink-and-green calico pony! Teller decided that it was an excellent cartoon of the situation, and that he should consider the employment of Blue Thunder as daily cartoonist.

Teller proposed to forecast the weather by means of a barometer in his possession. Straight Talk could only go about the camp repeating the statement of the official weather prophet of the tribe, a functionary who was accustomed each morning to dance about his medicine pole, whooping and yelling, and demanding of the sun that a certain kind of a day be forthwith furnished to the camp. A delegation of the chiefs always witnessed this ceremony. Each morning they called upon the medicine man, told him what sort of day was wanted, and stood about watching his frantic weather dance. At its close he assured them that the kind of weather they desired would be forthcoming. Then, if they got showers after asking for a clear day, etiquette forbade any question on the matter.

Teller knew that sometimes the tribal priests had visions that were adroitly colored by advance hints from the majority party in the council lodge. He proposed to watch things and forecast one of these visions. He would hint at possible elopements, which, since they would never occur, he would subsequently explain away. He proposed to create news after modern methods. He wrote till late in the night by the light of six candles, and arose early in the morning to make his weather observations. As he finished he heard Straight Talk making his morning rounds.

"It will be a nice day," said the herald, in English, before the guest tent. "The sacred willows for the sweet lodge will be brought in this morning. Games this afternoon. Six Candles will begin talking to-day. He worked late last night making medicine. Beware of the white man. He makes a new medicine every day, yet never comes to the end of his ills. He makes new talk every day; but he has never learned to tell the truth." Then, laughing, he rode away.

Teller, realizing that he had no appeal from this name, went outside and drew on the tent flap of the new herald lodge a candlestick with six lighted candles.

Directly after breakfast the camp was astonished to hear a spirited drumming. Men, women and children stood up to look, and there, by the new lodge of Six Candles, was Slow Dog, fantastic in garb, beating a summons on a tom-tom.

"Inside, inside, inside!" cried Slow Dog, with the enthusiasm of his calling. "Pay a trifle. Pass within the lodge and hear the news. One cent for each person. A plug of tobacco for a whole family. A can of tomatoes for a wagonful. Inside, inside, inside. A new kind of herald. Startling news. Funny jokes. Come and hear who's to be married. Come and hear what White Rabbit says about that race he's going to win. Do you want to know what kind of a day it will be? Blue Thunder says it will be fair. It will rain. Six Candles knows it will rain. Come and hear how he knows. *Inside, inside, inside!*"

The crier ceased and disappeared within the new herald's lodge. The Indians, like children, were curious. They laughed at each other for going, but at once many started for the lodge. In ten minutes the tent was full, and Six Candles, closing the flaps against a hundred more, asked them to wait a few moments. Every one had paid admission cheerfully, save Willow Blossom, the daughter of Calling Water, the belle of her tribe, who had come laughingly boasting to her sisters of her pass.

The eager, laughing tentful were kept waiting a few moments for their fun. That was Indian etiquette; the more important the occasion, the longer one waits for the speaker. Slow Dog appeared suddenly from behind a curtain in all his fantastic garb. Mounting a small platform made of empty boxes, he held the written sheets before him. With a profound look of wisdom he read a paragraph to himself and then talked it out in good round Sioux.

"Blue Thunder says it will be a pleasant day. He does not know what he is talking about. It will shower all the afternoon. Six Candles has a medicine that tells. You wait and see. If it does not shower Six Candles will admit you all to this tent to-morrow free of charge."

The company gasped. They were caught. The new heraldry was a success on the instant. For a quarter hour they stood listening, now with pleasure at pretty sentiments, now with laughter at personal allusions, now in grim silence at true references to agency abuses, now with excitement at hints of elopements. Finally Slow Dog ended with the yellow feature of this first edition. "Three days hence, at the hour when the sun is highest, Willow Blossom, daughter of Calling Water, will give a maidens' feast. It is rumored that a certain brave will challenge a maid who is planning to attend. Six Candles will endeavor to trace this rumor and the name of the man. Come to-morrow morning and hear the latest in this unusual matter."

At the mention of her coming feast, the maiden, Willow Blossom, had started violently, for it was a breach of courtesy to announce it before the morning of the day. But as Slow Dog sped on to his hinted scandal, she stood speechless in astonishment. It was the privilege of the men to challenge any maid at such a feast. But such a challenge was a dangerous matter. His accusations, if proven, meant degradation for the girl; if unproven, a severe public beating for himself. For a brave to brag of such a thing in advance was unspeakable. Willow Blossom, the beauty, the rich, the chosen bride of Cloudy Sky, turned away with bowed head. The company followed, their excited faces causing those outside to make a rush to get in.

It was noon before all who wished to hear had paid their mite at the door of Six Candles' tent. The new herald felt elated over his success, and went to keep a dinner engagement with Miss Sun Hair.

The affair between Mr. Will Teller,

owner of the Plains City *Daily Trumpet*, and Miss Lillian Ladue, daughter of the Reverend Ladue, and herself a teacher in the mission school, had advanced to that delightful stage where each was afraid of the other. Will Teller was so thoroughly in love that he dared not speak for fear the spoken word would banish the unspoken dream. Lillian Ladue found her own heart whispering its wish, and dreaded each day lest she do something to mar the glow in her lover's eyes.

"Just in time," was the greeting of the missionary. "Lillian will not be here, I am sorry to say. Willow Blossom sent for her to attend some sort of a conference. But you must stay. The wife and I want to hear about your new venture."

"The *Daily Six Candles* does seem to have made a hit," said Teller. "Such an economical venture, too. No plant, no presses, no telegraph tolls. Just hire a tent and have an Indian reader."

After dinner Mr. Teller lingered a while at the missionary's lodge, hoping that Miss Ladue would return. But Miss Ladue—the maiden Sun Hair, while in this camp—was listening to the fiery demands of Willow Blossom that the white guest be forced instantly to reveal the name of the brave who would challenge. None could do it so well as the white girl, who had brought Six Candles to the camp. But if, as Sun Hair, the white maid sympathized with Willow Blossom, so, as Miss Ladue, did the white girl shrink from going on such an errand to this particular white man. So the conference dragged, and Mr. Teller returned to the guest lodge without seeing his heart's desire.

The photographer was waiting for him. "See here, Will, I do not wish to be meddlesome, but your first edition seems to have created an unfortunate sensation. This maidens' feast is one of the most sacred customs of this simple people. You should have given the name of that Indian. Then the girls would have hunted him out and had a show down. Now they are working themselves into a frenzy over the mystery, and Straight Talk is going from

man to man to run this thing to cover. He may scoop you."

"Impossible."

"Don't be too sure. There are only just so many Indians here. Straight Talk knows them all."

"But he doesn't know this one, for the simple reason that there is no such Indian. Don't you know modern journalism yet, my boy? To-day's edition of the *Daily Six Candles* says 'It is rumored' an Indian will challenge; tomorrow's edition will say that the maids have held a conference and indignantly denied the possible basis for such a challenge; the next day's issue will dismiss the whole matter by saying that the Indian was bluffing, and has been scared out. Everybody will have had plenty of excitement, the *Daily Six Candles* will have jumped in circulation, and next day the public will want a new sensation. Such a performance is quite universal in journalism."

"The devil it is!"

"Look here," said Teller, actually laughing at his friend's indignation, "modern journalism, with all its wonders of gathering, printing and distributing news, yet finds news in its essence to be the same old thing—gossip."

"But when you invent an attack on a girl's character it's not gossip. It's scandal; and scandal on a reservation calls for proof or for broken heads," said the photographer, hotly.

"There is where you fail to grasp a distinction," said Teller. "Let me set you right. All journalism is gossip, and all gossip is personal. A thing to be quickly appreciated by a mass of people must directly concern a person. News to be salable must touch the fancy. A nurse marries a man whom she has attended through a fever; she is called 'the pretty Miss So-and-so,' and the man is said to be 'a gentleman of independent means.' The girl may be homely and the man a poor duck on a salary, but the reporter who cannot hint at a romance in that item is no journalist. The touch of romance must be there. The men want to read of pretty women; the women want to read of men who are strong, whether it be

the strength of virtue or crime or riches or of muscle. The feelings which are common to us all are the ones which news must arouse if it passes the test of salable news. But notice, please, that all such news is impersonal to the mass of readers. You are interested in an article because it concerns a person, because it is a personality; but it is impersonal from your standpoint, since you do not know the person about whom the item is written. Take a paper with a million readers. It comes to you to-day and is filled, as usual, with personalities. Out of that million readers, perhaps fifty people are concerned in some manner. Those who are concerned pleasantly are made happy, the others cringe when they read their deeds in print. To them these are personal personalities; to the mass of readers these are impersonal personalities. Now take my hinted challenge of this morning's *Six Candles*. It is a personality, because it says one maiden may be challenged; but it is impersonal since no one maid is mentioned. Each girl in this tribe is wondering which of the other girls it's going to be. In a day or two I'll adroitly dismiss the thing, and there will be no harm done."

"That's just where you're wrong," said the photographer. "Nothing can be impersonal in a camp of three thousand Indians. Everybody knows everybody else. You have said 'it is rumored,' and they have believed you. The statement strikes at the maidens of marriageable age in the tribe. There are a limited number of them. Perhaps two hundred. They go about, each looking into the faces of the others, questioning, questioning. It is all one great family. There is none of your 'impersonal personality' possible in so vital a matter. Instead of each maiden suspecting some one of the others, she must prove and identify the personality of this rumor to clear herself. Don't you see that you have missed the significance of the custom? We poor, practical white people have nothing like it. We have no simplicity, no poetry. We would blush at such a

thing, yet this ceremony is the strongest moral factor in the tribal life. An Indian girl of spirit would kill herself if she lost her right to attend that ceremony. The nearest we cold, white people have to the custom is the white veil of the bride and the clergyman's words: 'If any man knows aught why these two should not wed.' Would you stand up before the guests at a wedding, just before the bride and groom came in, and, to stir a temporary excitement, say: 'I understand there is a man here who is to challenge the bride's purity.' Would you dare do such a thing, intending all the while to say when the bride came in: 'I find I was mistaken. It was a false rumor. There is no such man.' Yet you have done a thing equally appalling in the lives of these Indian girls; you have made just such a threat against the two hundred maids in this camp."

Teller was silent. It was beginning to rain. But his success in predicting it was lost in the alarm over the photographer's words. Evidently yellow journalism was a serious matter among red men. Moreover, his misjudgment would set harshly in the white girl's estimation. "Six Candles is the wonder of the day," thought he, bitterly. "But evidently I have been the prompt fool in the house of hesitating angles." Nor could he bring himself, when the evening fires were built, to go to the lodge of Sun Hair.

When Six Candles looked out of the entrance of the guest lodge next morning he saw several Indian maidens with their chaperons standing before his herald lodge. Clearly the second number of his publication was in demand. He was glad. He had planned to continue the rumor of a purposed challenge, and at the same time prepare the way for a journalistic retreat. One chaperon called to him to open his herald lodge at once, but he declined. "Come when Slow Dog beats the drum," said he. Even on the defensive he proposed to be dignified.

The happiest Indian in camp that morning was Slow Dog. He beat the tom-tom and cried, "Inside, inside, in-

side!" while enough people crowded around him to fill the herald lodge many times. Straight Talk was the next happiest. He had been from man to man till he had called the roll of the little camp. Satisfied that there was no such Indian, he foresaw the end of this new herald lodge. But Six Candles was on his mettle. When he stood in the entrance and said, "All ready," he saw that the maidens came forward alone, Willow Blossom and her chaperon at their head. Modern journalism had lost its impersonality, and was personally the issue of the day.

Slow Dog sprang upon his platform and translated the sheets as before. He knew the one item which those waiting maids wished to hear, so, with that item saved to the end, he enjoyed to the full his position, and dragged out Volume I., No. 2, of the *Daily Six Candles*. It had rained yesterday, as predicted, Slow Dog bragged, and again predicted showers, in the face of Blue Thunder's assurance of a fair day. Cooking Fire, the priest, was to go that morning to sit under the blazing sun and receive a vision as to the propriety of the presence of this camera man in camp. Was it right to take the faces of Indians on glass and carry them away? Was it not making them prisoners? Some of the older women had grumbled. The chiefs had referred it to the priests for a vision. The photographer had gone in the night and explained the situation to Cooking Fire. Incidentally, he had left a ten-dollar gold piece in Cooking Fire's tobacco pouch. The photographer had told Teller, and Teller predicted a vision favorable to photography. So Slow Dog translated it, and the maidens gasped, wondering what manner of man was this Six Candles that he should dare this. Surely, if he could foretell a priest's visions, he must be right when he foretold the challenge of a mere man.

"All the braves have not arrived in camp," said Slow Dog, finally coming to the yellow. "By to-morrow morning all the braves will be in. Cloudy Sky, from the west, who comes with fifty people to claim betrothal to Wil-

low Blossom, will be here to-morrow, that he may attend the maidens' feast and see his beloved one take the oath of purity. Plenty Rice and Fought-the-Bear will be in from the south. These braves and many others are coming in. Then will Six Candles either give the name of this Indian or expose this rumor. Maybe some unworthy man has had it in his heart to harm a worthy maid."

Slow Dog ceased. This positive promise was something, but Willow Blossom wanted more. Holding tightly to the hand of her chaperon, she wheeled on Six Candles.

"Straight Talk has been to every man in the camp, and no man is here who will challenge. If an Indian who is coming is to challenge, then who told it to you?"

For a moment Teller thought hard. Then he said: "No one here has told this to me. I had it in my mind when I came."

"But who told you? And when? And where?"

This audience of Indian girls conveyed by sharp-eyed squaws was hard to face. Teller had but one way left him. "I decline to say. White men heralds do not tell where they learn things. Besides, this is a mere rumor. Slow Dog said to you, 'It is rumored a man will challenge a maid.' To-morrow I will either have his name or I will prove that the rumor was false."

"That is not enough," exclaimed Willow Blossom. "Rumor is a white man's word. White men lie; always they lie. At the agency school we read in books of white men who sold truth for gain. At the mission school they teach the Indian children to sing free songs that white men wrote, and then the white man takes away our land and says the Indian shall work, work, work! At the agency they put false words on boxes of food. They give us poor beef and write in the reports that the steers were fat. Even the white men teach their wives to lie; to say, 'Send the Indian maid to school, that she may be like a white maid,' and then, when she has been to school, to send the Indian

maid to the kitchen to cook, while the white maid sits and makes dresses to catch a husband. Only the white maids can tell the truth. Sun Hair would not come here with me this morning. See! She knows how white men lie. She knows that rumor is a white man's word made to cover lies. She does not know how to lie yet even for her love. But even she will learn after she marries you. Always where the white man goes there are lies. This is a lie. I know! I have been to every maid and to every maid's chaperon. I know! To-morrow I will come again, not to hear that name, but to hear the new white herald say he lied and to help beat him and drive him from camp."

Willow Blossom ceased, trembling from her passionate words. Many of the maids had been to school and understood what she had said. Others knew only from her earnestness that she was pronouncing against the white men. As she ceased they stood irresolute, to be awakened from their spell by the patter of rain on the lodge. Then with bowed heads, shy eyes and hurrying feet they separated. Had not Six Candles twice predicted rain in spite of Blue Thunder's promise of fine days?

Throughout the day the lodge of Six Candles was thronged with silent, curious people. All other public matters were suspended. A depression settled over The-Camp-of-the-Summer-Feast. The sun shone between showers on a listless people. They were waiting for the morrow; not for the name of an Indian, that he might be dragged before the main council lodge and his threatened challenge there demanded, but for the confession of a white guest, that he might be flogged and banished.

The photographer suggested the hiring of some outcast to attend the feast and be challenged by Slow Dog; or the hiring of a dissolute youth to make a false challenge, and take the consequent public flogging. But that, Six Candles said, would be making fact to fit manufactured news. That, at least, was not journalism, which took liberties only in making the unreal seem real. He must play the game as he had

commenced. "One more day and I'll show you a trick," said he, hopefully. "Rumor is a very handy weapon; I think I can make it defend me."

But before the opportunity came the unexpected happened, and in the dreadful reality of his work Six Candles stood aghast, wishing that six monster snufflers had quenched his light ere he came to The-Camp-of-the-Summer-Feast.

Cloudy Sky, riding hard, the sooner to meet his loved one, the beautiful Willow Blossom, pushed into camp as the sun cut into the white-capped mountains to the west. His followers came after, urging the pony *travaux*. But he drove before him the fifty selected ponies that were to be the price of a chieftain's daughter. Cloudy Sky, son of a chief, was impetuous. He rode directly to the lodge of Calling Water, where the whisk of a fringed skirt by the entrance told him that Willow Blossom was listening.

"I rode as none have ridden," he chanted. "I drove the fifty ponies with the speed of the wind. To-morrow they shall stand in the corral of Calling Water. But to-night I will come and sing my love song. Will Willow Blossom then be ready to show me her face and let the moon see us join hands?"

Then Willow Blossom in her beauty and in her pride stood in the door of her father's lodge. "Cloudy Sky, I fear nothing from my own heart. But for your pride and your honor I am troubled. A new herald is in The-Camp-of-the-Summer-Feast. He has cried out to all listeners that at to-morrow's feast of the maidens, which I am to give in the Dakotas' prayer grove, a maid will be challenged. The brave Cloudy Sky must wait till the challenge has passed."

"Does this new herald hint that Willow Blossom is to be challenged?" Cloudy Sky was straight and tall and rigid on his pony.

Willow Blossom, daughter of the plains, was also proud. She smiled up at her lover. "Willow Blossom fears no challenge. She will help flog the false herald from the camp. She has

given her word. Cloudy Sky must wait."

Cloudy Sky had come to chant a love song, not to debate. He was impatient. "I do not like clever words. Prove to me you fear no challenge by joining hands with me to-night."

But Cloudy Sky did not know the tension to which the camp had been wrought over the challenge. Thus, when the maiden Willow Blossom dropped her eyes and shook her pretty head, he misunderstood. The pride of maidenhood to answer this unjust challenge was lost to him. He flew angry. "Shall I go, then, and tell my friends that the maiden Willow Blossom hesitates?"

Then anger had answered anger, and red-born pride faced red-born impatience. Willow Blossom gave him the most direct cut in her code: she turned her back, dropped the flaps of the lodge and went from his sight without a word.

Ten minutes later Cloudy Sky passed out of the camp, herding fifty ponies toward the west. Straight Talk, riding as for life, drove his pony squarely into the inclosure of the council tent, there to shout the alarm. "Cloudy Sky has quarreled with Willow Blossom. He believes this challenge, of which no man knows, is meant for her. Thus does the light from Six Candles blind the eyes."

Then, while the chiefs in council sat dazed at the news, he raced away to cry it through the camp, ending at the guest lodge, where he repeated it in English for the benefit of the photographer and Teller.

"That's what you would call an extra, isn't it?" asked the photographer, jesting even at the extreme moment.

"Yes, and I'm scooped," said Teller, bitterly. Moreover, he realized the blow of a personal personality. He must contrive to bring the angry lover back to camp.

For her part, the white girl realized that a time for action had come. For the sake of her red sisters, she was ready, as the maiden Sun Hair, to lead a charge on the herald lodge and tear

it down. For the sake of the really energetic young business man of Plains City, she was ready, as Miss Lillian Ladue, to make an effort at conciliation. To that end she ran to the lodge of Calling Water. There she heard the truth from the proud, the defiant, the wounded, the weeping Willow Blossom. Sun Hair went out with shining eyes and set purpose. It was now the honor of maidenhood against the tricks of modern journalism.

Straight around the circle of lodges went the white girl, leading the maiden Willow Blossom by the hand, calling to each lodge, "Come, sister. Come with Sun Hair." As maid after maid, clad perhaps in the daily calico, or perhaps in the costume of tribal festivity, joined her, the camp came out into the open, watching and waiting. It understood. The white girl, daughter of the missionary, teacher in the mission school, and sponsor for Six Candles' presence as guest at the camp, was going to the white man to demand the truth.

Mr. Will Teller saw this threatening advance and stood manfully in the entrance of the guest lodge, waiting for he knew not what. All the maidens of the tribe were in that advancing throng. The puzzled Willow Blossom, a sweet child crushed by a rumor coined for profit, coming to shame him with her tears; the white Sun Hair, the girl of his choice, come to weigh him in the balance. What man ever faced collective womanhood more helplessly?

The Amazon army, with its white-faced leader, stopped some distance from the guest lodge. Lillian Ladue, garbed in soft leather, beaded and trimmed as a maiden of the tribe, came on alone. She stood close to her lover and looked beyond into the guest lodge.

"No one must hear what I say to you," said the girl. "Are you quite alone?"

"Quite, Lillian. And let me relieve you of asking an embarrassing question. You wish to know the name of that Indian?"

The girl nodded. "You know what has happened. Willow Blossom is

questioned by her lover. You must tell me who told you of that rumor."

"Impossible! There is no such Indian."

"Will! Oh, my friend! What have you done?"

The girl's eyes were wide with horror. It was her turn now to face a heartbreak.

"I made it up, not knowing what the consequence would be," said Teller. "I had intended saying to-morrow morning that the braves were all in and that the rumor was false, and then give the maidens' feast a great send-off. I am humbly sorry. I have done a common journalistic thing; but I will make uncommon manly efforts to undo it. I will do anything and everything I can to restore things."

The white girl looked earnestly into his eyes, her lips gone white and trembling. She saw that he spoke the truth. The harm was the harm of error, not of intention. But the harm was done, and the Indians would not understand. It would mean rough handling; perhaps his life. Instantly she became a white woman as eager to shield him as she had been to clear Willow Blossom.

"There is but one way," she said, so low and so firm that he was alarmed. "Willow Blossom has been stabbed to the heart; you can restore her lover, but she cannot forgive at the pleading of a mere quibble. Nor would the tribe forgive you. You must go on to the end of your invention."

"I cannot. There is no such man."

"You must be the man. Say—say to those girls that you are the man—that you will challenge me!"

"Lillian! What are you saying?"

"Say that you have kissed me. That I am bound to you. Say anything to appease these children. You must do it to save your life. Then—then take me away where none of them can come and shame me."

The white girl bowed her head in her hands and shook with sobs. The white

man saw in that desperate moment the truth of his error. He realized the agony of the girl he loved; the stolid silence of the waiting maids; the menacing peace that held the camp as a thing petrified. But under it he saw a white girl's love for him; a love that had prompted a dear sacrifice. He caught her hand and kissed it. He became a man as primitive, as real and as impulsive as any who stood by the great circle of lodges watching.

"No, no, my girl! I've been wrong. Now I'll be a man. *Hear me, all of you! I lied! There is no Indian who will challenge. I lied! Do you hear? I lied!* No, no, Lillian! Let me go—I must do this! *Hear you, Straight Talk! Ride for your life. Find Cloudy Sky. Tell him I lied. Bring him back. Fifty dollars for you, Straight Talk! Fifty dollars more for a peace gift to Willow Blossom. Tell Cloudy Sky so. But ride, ride, ride!*"

Straight Talk heard and smiled. He had pushed his pony close to the entrance of the Six Candles herald lodge. Reaching up, he grasped the sign whereon was painted a white man pursuing an Indian, and tore it down. Swinging the trophy above his head and yelling in the glory of victory won, he sped away toward a cloud of dust that was rising lazily into the face of the sunset.

Mr. Will Teller heard the yell and understood it; heard an answering shout of laughter rise out of the great circle of lodges, and welcomed it; saw Willow Blossom dart away with the tribal maidenhood racing after her, and realized his escape; then suddenly realized that he was holding a blond girl to his breast and that she was laughing.

"Sweetheart, you are ashamed of me!"

The girl hid her smiling face in his arm. "Never mind what Sun Hair may have thought," said she. "White girls are just as silly as some very good white men. No doubt I will be intensely proud of you in Plains City."

ELLEN BERWICK



II.

THE rapidity with which an emergency fund could dwindle was the fact which the next week or two impressed upon me more strongly than any other. To be sure, I was guilty of one or two contributory extravagances. I had no dishes, no knickknacks, no pictures, save the inevitable family photographs, for my room. And as I became acquainted with the rooms of my fellow lodgers, the passion for personal possessions, born, I am sure, in every woman, took hold of me. For instance, the old brass coal hod on Dr. Lyons' study hearthstone filled me with envy; the quaint gilt-banded, gilt-bordered mirror above Miss Putnam's narrow black mantel roused my longing for mirrors. The Sheffield tray on which the tea things were disposed in Miss Lester Franklin's room made me view theft with almost lenient eyes. Miss Franklin, by the way, was an art student, and her quarters were full of scraps of Eastern embroidery, unframed sketches, foreign rosaries, dusty casts, and queer vases, which held flowers always, by some miracle, on the point of dropping to pieces.

I sent home immediately for some brass fire dogs, an old willow plate or two, and twoscore of my favorite books. Then, refusing, with the cheerful independence of youth, to be cast down by poverty, and really rather rejoicing in my freedom, I set out to buy a few actual necessities. How two heavy brass candlesticks from the Russian quarter, an honorably ancient looking Damascus bowl, a scarf of glorious yellow Syrian embroidery, and a carved sandalwood fan came to be regarded as essentials, I am not quite sure. There is a spell exerted upon one by the foreign quar-

BY ANNE O'HAGAN



ters of New York—into which my new companions initiated me—which made the Agonquitt standards of necessity seem remote and uninteresting.

A copper tea tray and tea kettle purchased in a noisy cellar from a voluble Hebrew, his wife, his three children, and most of the neighbors, I easily persuaded myself to be necessary, even according to home definitions. The small afternoon tea service of cheap blue and white was merely decent. A lamp, of course, was an economy, since it would cost less than an oculist's fee. Oh, I had the most reasonable excuses for almost all my expenditures! Nevertheless, by the time they were bought, my first week's lodging and laundry paid, and my meals provided, the emergency fund had shrunk like a punctured tire.

I did not confide my difficulties to anyone. No one in the busy household in which I found myself a lodger had leisure for confidences, and, anyway, we Agonquitt people are not trained to communicativeness. Miss Putnam was cordial, came to my room two or three times in the week for ten or fifteen minutes, invited me to hers, introduced me to the two medical students—nice, sensible, earnest young women, up to their ears in their senior year's work—and to Lester Franklin, whose first name persisted in seeming to me an affectation. But they all had their work, their engagements, their established friends. To none of them could I reveal my anxiety and my position. I had so wanted to keep that one hundred and twenty-five dollars intact, and at the rate at which I was spending money it would scarcely suffice for the six weeks.

Of course it was on a rainy day when the sense of my financial difficulties finally overcame me. I have

often noticed that in sunshiny weather I am, in spite of my Maine forebears, a very *Micawber* for irresponsible, groundless optimism. I am perfectly sure that if the Pilgrim Fathers had landed among more genial surroundings, thrift and the far-famed New England conscience would never have been the traditional traits of their descendants.

My moneymaking accomplishments were very few. I couldn't keep chickens for six weeks on Eleventh Street; I couldn't tutor for six weeks, even if I had known anybody who wanted tutoring in the branches with which I had a speaking acquaintance. I looked over the list of "Help Wanted" in the morning paper that rainy morning in the second week of my enforced holiday.

There seemed a painfully limited demand for such services as I was able to supply. Cooks, chambermaids and maids-of-all-work were evidently needed, but stenographers, I judged, were a drug in the market. However, two firms advertised for "Typists, neat, rapid and accurate, with considerable experience." My experience was scarcely considerable, but I determined to apply for the positions, and conceal from the employers the fact that I should shortly wish to resign from them.

The first office in which I found myself did not look promising. It was in an old building downtown. It was bare, dusty, disorderly, and its only occupant when I arrived was a young man, not more than thirty years old—slim, boyish, nervous and furtive. His face had a sort of dusty, pasty pallor that spoke of airless rooms; his nails advertised his unfamiliarity with the nicer rites of the toilet. His linen was dingy, his cravat loud. Altogether, Mr. Leon Golding was an unprepossessing person.

He darted one swift, comprehensive look at me, and after that stared at the wall behind me, the door, the window—anywhere but at me. My lack of experience evidently did not daunt him, and I gathered the impression that he was rather glad of my want of acquaintances

in New York. He made a few inquiries as to Agonquitt, and took a note concerning it. All the time the feeling grew upon me that I did not want to work for him. But I reasoned it down. "Nonsense!" I told myself, sternly. "Eight dollars a week will be eight dollars a week. Don't be silly and womanish. Be reasonable."

A large, unctuous man, growing bald and wearing a glistening, dyed goatee, interrupted our conversation. He seemed very familiar with Mr. Golding's business, and, retiring with him behind a wire screen which partitioned the office, he attended the unlocking of the safe and, taking a box from it, rammed it into a green cloth bag.

"I'm an old-fashioned fellow, Miss Berton—it was Berton, wasn't it? No? Berwick? Ah!—and I carry my green lawyer's bag about with me. It was the way in my part of the country a good many years ago. I'm an old fellow now." He smilingly awaited my disclaimer, but it did not come. "Well, well, I must be going. I look in on this fellow very often—try to keep him out of jail, Miss Berwick, try to keep him out of jail. Ha, ha! I hope I'll see you soon again. Good-day. Good-day, Leon, my boy."

Mr. Golding accompanied him to the elevator. I sat and looked at the letters heaped upon the desks, at the bulging mail bags in the corner. Evidently, in spite of its meager office equipment, the Jupiter and Mars Railway Investment Company had a large correspondence.

To make a long matter short, I was engaged as Mr. Golding's stenographer. I went to work the next morning at half-past eight, and I tackled the correspondence. I sent circulars to every part of the country, promising investors five per cent. a month as a return upon their investment. I read poorly written, misspelled letters from servant girls asking for information about the wonder-working company; I read pitiful letters from little farms, from foreign miners in the coal fields of Pennsylvania, prim letters from country school teachers. I answered them all with the

glorious literature of the company. All the time I had the queerest feeling of distrust.

When the office boy brought in a bag of mail in the middle of the forenoon, Mr. Golding fairly pounced upon it. He retired behind the wire partition, locked its door after him and further screened himself behind a desk. But, even so, I saw him drawing money—bills, silver and checks—out of the envelopes. Upon each envelope he made a memorandum of the amount received. After about two hours he passed these letters over to me, telling me to acknowledge the receipt of the sum contained and to promise the investment asked. The gentleman with the green bag then came in, smiling oilily, and, after a few minutes at the safe, they went out together.

On the third day of my employment the lawyer came in somewhat earlier than before. His manner was hasty, perturbed, even violent in a low-voiced way. I could not overhear what was said, but Mr. Golding's sallow, ashy face, as he told me that he was called out for a few hours, was proclamation of some disaster. I only thought that he had had bad news; his agitation was that of a man dreading the death of some beloved friend.

"Shall I go on with these?" I asked, indicating the usual letters.

"Yes, yes—no, destroy them. No"—seeing my look of utter bewilderment—"I don't know what I am saying. Yes, go on. I'll be back after lunch."

Usually my own lunch consisted of two sandwiches and an apple brought in an ignominious bundle from Eleventh Street. To-day I supplemented it by a walk down to the Battery. I had not been there before, and the first glimpse of the beautiful bay captivated me. I loitered. I rejoiced in the green grass of the little park, in the loungers on the benches. And when a boatload of immigrants was landed from Ellis Island—earringed, shawled, dark, sparkling, vivacious, with their uncouth loads—I was enchanted. I delayed unconsciously, and when I made my way to the office again it was nearly three o'clock.

The door was open, and there was a hum of voices inside. Some instinct made me stand still for a second.

"They've all flew the coop. Warned," remarked a bored voice.

"Well, the stenographer expected to come back," said some one else, obstinately. "Look at her machine."

I went in—slowly. There were half a dozen men there sprawled on the bench and chairs. They all sat suddenly erect, and one officiously arose and shut the door behind me. I had a glimpse of a badge as one man's coat flapped. Another, a tall, good-looking youth, with a politely weary, amused air, produced a notebook from his pocket.

"Are you connected with this concern?" demanded the man with the badge. I looked at him, round-eyed and stupid.

"I came," I said, slowly, "to see Mr. Golding. Ain't he here?"

"Not yet," said the man with the badge.

"Nor likely to be," supplemented the youth with the notebook.

"Oh!" said I, still more stupidly. "Didn't he leave no word when he was coming back?"

"He didn't leave no word," the notebook man mocked me.

"Oh!" I said.

"What did you want to see him about?" blustered the man with the badge.

"There was a letter," I blundered, "he wrote. How money could be made. Then, since I sent the money, I ain't heard no more—"

Oh, Ellen Berwick! I don't know whether I was more proud or ashamed of that piece of deception.

"Another victim," said one of the men, grimly. "If anyone belonging to the confounded shooting match would come in, we could hold them for witnesses—the office boy, the stenographer, anybody! Tell us your story, young lady."

But I incased myself in rustic reticence, refused to trust them with my tale, and was finally allowed to depart as a dull provincial who deserved

whatever losses she had incurred. And the next morning's paper informed me that the get-rich-quick concern of Mr. Leon Golding had been raided the day before, but that the swindling financier and all his cohorts had escaped. A pathetic incident, the paper added, was the appearance of a poor girl whose savings had been stolen by the thieves.

I sat at home and read the tale with retrospective shudders. Suppose I had been at the machine when the detectives and newspaper men came in! Would I have been "held as a witness" in the Tombs? And how would Hennen & Charter have liked to employ as widely advertised a secretary as I should have been? I was out of pocket by the experience, but could find only gratitude in my heart for my escape from worse things.

It was in a very cautious spirit that I approached the next place where a "neat, accurate and experienced typist" was needed. I found myself in the hall of a sumptuous uptown school on Riverside Drive, awaiting my turn with seventeen other applicants for the position. We all eyed one another suspiciously. What experience the others had with the bland, aquiline, gray-haired dame who managed the business with the air of a duchess opening a London charity bazaar, I do not know. She told me that she desired an assistant to her secretary, but she intimated, delicately but unmistakably, that no matter what my intellectual and business fitness for the position, I would not do at all. I don't think she told me in so many words that Miss Keziah's handiwork in the matter of clothes could not be seen entering and leaving her school, but I went forth with the idea burned into me that it was my personal appearance, my lack of sartorial distinction, which kept me from that berth.

It may have been the smart induced by this criticism which sent me straight to the bathroom on my return to the house, and started me upon what was really a creditable family wash in the basin. Dr. Lyons, bless her kind or her unsuspecting heart, had no haughty notice posted to the effect that laundry

work should not be done there. I dabbled with handkerchiefs and stocks, with turnovers and cuffs, until I had worked off some of the rage that had scorched me after my interview with the lady who was forming the manners and the ideals of the young on Riverside Drive. Then I pasted the flat articles upon the mirrors and upon the panes of my attic window, according to the money-saving habit of the boarding-house-lodger-laundress in all ages. And then, ruefully regarding the silver in my purse, I made my way to the Margaret Louisa for my dinner. Almost nightly I ate there now, although sometimes when the thought of the crowd, the narrow tables, the banging and the steaming, overbalanced the desire for the wholesome, well-cooked food, I patronized the delicatessen shops on Sixth Avenue, and ate a home-made dinner before my fire.

After dinner I wandered into a library devoted to the needs of the working woman. I looked over the magazines for a while in company with a dozen or fifteen other forlorn looking women of various ages. And then I started homeward. Evidently destiny had been carefully guiding my footsteps, for on a bulletin in the lower hall I noticed for the first time announcements not only of classes and clubs in which the ambitious might learn absolutely everything to be known, but also the advertisement of a certain employment bureau, evidently adapted to the needs of just such girls as myself. Thither the next morning I made up my mind to wend my way.

I have already implied that the manner of the officials in institutions devoted to the self-supporting woman sometimes lacks the cordiality which the young demand in their intercourse with their fellows. I felt this more strongly than ever when I approached the lady in charge of this agency. She made me feel that it was almost ignominious to be alive, while to be alive and in need of work was positively criminal.

She asked me crisply what sort of work I wished to do, and I blundered

hopelessly, saying that almost anything would answer.

"Almost anything?" she answered, tartly. "That means, of course, that you are not equipped to do any work properly. 'Almost anything' is practically synonymous with nothing."

I did not compliment her upon her apparent aptitude for metaphysics. I did not even get angry. I looked vaguely and hopelessly around, whereupon she more kindly proceeded to investigate my fitness for work. "If you can sew——" she suggested. But I shook my head. At that moment a blessed interruption arrived in the person of an imposing young footman. I felt it quite right that I should be abandoned for him at once, and as I stood waiting for my chance at formal leavetaking I overheard his conversation with the suddenly deferential lady of the desk.

It seemed that Mrs. Van Hoffman wanted some young woman sent to her who could exercise the dogs. From the questioning and answering back and forth I gradually made out that in Mrs. Van Hoffman's humble establishment there were only seven servants, and it was easily plain that none of these could be expected to exercise the dogs. When the footman had departed, bearing comforting assurances to Mrs. Van Hoffman that the awful gap in her retinue would soon be filled, I daringly asked for the job. For a moment my interlocutress looked at me as though she saw in the request only a well-laid scheme upon the Van Hoffman jewels or silver. But I mentioned the powerful name of Mrs. Hennen as my introducer to the establishment, and forthwith followed in the wake of the footman up to Seventy-second Street.

I went into a hall all white marble and Turkish rugs and palms and clipped laurel bushes and queer dwarf Japanese trees in tubs of brass and Oriental pottery. I passed into a library all tapestry and Spanish leather, and books in beautifully gleaming dress. To me there, in fluttered Mrs. Van Hoffman—tall, slender, graceful, fair-haired, ineffective and fretful. Did I understand dogs? Was I used to them? Did they

care for me? Did I know New York well? What references had I? What did Miss Blank mean by sending a stranger in the city to fill such an important post in the household? If I should gain it, I would have to come at ten o'clock each morning—did I understand that?—at ten o'clock, no later and no earlier; the last dog exerciser had displayed a horrible lack of promptness. She rather liked my face, though; I looked kind and sensible; perhaps, after all, I might do, in spite of my inexperience in the city. She would send for the dogs and let them decide.

The dogs came, and indeed they were beauties. A beautiful great Dane, who ought to have been the guardian of a lovely lady of a mediæval castle; a Boston bull, who eyed me sharply and then came and leaped upon my lap, and a little toy spaniel.

"You could never let Imogene off the leash, of course," said Mrs. Van Hoffman. "Tom and Jerry—they're the bull and the great Dane—they can run by themselves. But never let them get out of your sight. Never let them fight, and never let them have anything to do with the other dogs in the park. Of course, if Imogene grew tired, you would have to carry her in your arms. Above all things, don't let the dogs scare any of the children in the park, though why there should be children in the park ready to be scared, I am sure I don't see. But Mr. Van Hoffman had a nasty suit brought by the father of some little imbecile who teased Jerry until Jerry rolled him over on the grass. So you'd have to be very careful about that. Now, do you think you'd like the job?"

"How much do you pay?" I asked, baldly.

Mrs. Van Hoffman hesitated.

"Well, as you seem rather a superior sort of young woman," she said, with graceful patronage, "I think Mr. Van Hoffman might go as high as fifty cents an hour. It would be one hour a day. And if you made a success of it I could recommend you to four or five other friends of mine, and your whole day could be full."

The prospect of five hours a day spent in chaperoning dogs of all breeds, ages and dispositions through the park did not appeal to me strongly. I am a vigorous young woman, but it seemed to me that a sanitarium would be my inevitable lodging after the experience. I shook my head and said that I feared that, after all, the position was not just suited to me or I to it. And as I went out through the exotic splendors of the hall I heard Mrs. Van Hoffman, probably addressing the dogs, say, "What do these people expect? A share of railroad stock, or what?"

After all, it was through Dr. Lyons that I finally found some temporary work. She rapped at my door on the afternoon of the day when I had declined to become the peripatetic companion of Mrs. Van Hoffman's dogs. She was a little woman, brisk and businesslike in her manner, but, for all her brevity, never lacking in a human warmth and kindness. I don't think it took her four minutes to tell me what she wanted, to find out that I could do it, and to be gone again, yet she left me feeling cheered and invigorated; and it was not alone the prospect of work that she had held out to me which produced the pleasurable glow. She wanted me to go for two hours a day to a private room in a hospital with which she was connected, to read to a patient who was convalescing there, and who did not have a private nurse who could give her all her time.

My invalid was a friendly soul, and if I would have lingered after the two hours' reading was over I could have heard the story of her life many times—just how many brothers and sisters she had had, just what she wore at her first dance, just what her husband said when he proposed to her, just how she felt when she was going under the ether and when she came out of it. She had a taste for the romantic historical novel, a form of literature particularly dreadful to me. She interrupted the readings now and again with breathless exclamations of "Splendid! Isn't that splendid, Miss Berwick?" Sometimes when the hero made a particular

ly noble speech or a particularly thrilling rescue she closed her eyes and sighed ecstatically. "Don't you ever feel," she asked me, "that you ought to have lived in those days when life was so full of chivalry?" But I was obliged to tell her that a course of gadzook fiction only made me the more content with our own time of porcelain bathtubs and eight hours a day of work downtown for our adorers. Then she would laugh at me reprovingly and say, "You're dreadfully cynical, aren't you, Miss Berwick? Are all young girls so cynical nowadays, or is it only college girls that are?"

But even with the retarding influence of the historical novel, the good lady was finally completely recovered. I had had five dollars a week from her, and for that I had done, besides the reading, many little errands and some few secretary's services. It had not, of course, been enough to pay my expenses, and the emergency fund was a very limp thing now in its chamois bag. I had still two weeks to live through before my engagement in Mr. Hennen's office began.

The day on which I took my leave of my romantic invalid I was somewhat gloomy. In spite of the resolution with which I had persuaded myself that a cup of drug-store bouillon and an apple from a push-cart made a nourishing luncheon, and that there was nothing intrinsically more undignified in washing one's woollens than one's handkerchiefs in the bathroom basin, I was distinctly alarmed by my poverty.

The day itself had not been conducive to good cheer. There was a thick mist in the air, and the pavements oozed a slimy moisture. The hospital had always been depressing to me with its odor of ether and its glimpses of sickness even in the corridors. Moreover, I had not been having any antidote of liveliness to the dull routine of the days. Attending evening lectures to take notes in order that one's stenographic skill and speed may not grow less may be a virtuous way of passing time, but it does not develop a vivacious attitude. And Bob Matthews had

been near me only once in two weeks. That time he had taken me to the theater, to be sure, but he had been much less impressed by my appearance in my own simple finery than he had by the borrowed plumage in which he had seen me earlier. And both these facts—his neglect of me and his lack of voluble admiration when he did see me—rankled in my soul.

I tramped due eastward from the hospital toward Fifth Avenue. I was walking for economy and for health, but there was no reason why I should confine myself to the jostling crowd of the poor and busy streets. A glimpse of the early evening gayety on Fifth Avenue might cheer me, I decided.

I had not yet reached that point in the mental career of the New York working woman when the sight of opulence and leisure is distressing, and when the spectacle of the glittering streets becomes a pang instead of a delight. So, as my gloom fell from me, I was able to take a growing satisfaction in the trappings of the broughams and victorias that rolled up the slippery asphalt, in the brisk tread of the men and women, well-groomed—though I loathe that epithet redolent of the stables—well-dressed, alert and serenely scornful of all unpleasant things.

I was still provincial enough to enjoy the shop windows with wholehearted zest. Indeed, that is a trait which I do not think any amount of sophistication can destroy in me. The sheen of lustrous fabrics, the glitter of trimmings, the fall of laces, the curve of wonderful hats, the allurements of marvelous negligées—all these were to me as beautiful as the exotic displays in the florists' windows and the shining wealth of the jewelers. However, it was before a jeweler's window that I had paused to feast my eyes upon a tiara of diamonds fit for a queen of the fairies, upon a wonderful spray of emeralds that cunningly simulated an apotheciosed bunch of grapes, upon sapphires bluer than the sea beyond Agon-quitt on the most cloudless summer day. I dare say that my jaw had dropped down and that my eyes were bulging

with true rustic admiration, when suddenly some one stood beside me in the silver-spangled mist of the early evening.

I turned to leave the show case without looking up, but as I moved, the presence beside me took voice:

"Miss Berwick, aren't you going to remember me?"

I started a little, of course, as I glanced up, yet I had known the voice, assured, laughing, friendly. It was Mr. Hennen's partner who beamed down upon me from a height that seemed even more impressive than it had on the day when I met him in the office. He was the embodiment of the spirit of the scene. Albeit I was no connoisseur in men's fashions, I knew that his clothes represented the last sartorial word of the authorities. Yet he wore them with the accustomed air that took from them any suggestion of merely theatric elegance. He was handsome, too, and there seemed to radiate from him a cheerful, unshaken conviction that all good things, all soft and pleasant things, were his by a species of divine right.

I answered him stupidly enough. "Oh!" I cried, "it's you, Mr. Charter."

"Are you walking down? May I walk with you?"

A shy awkwardness seized me, though, as a usual thing, my awkwardness is not tinged with timidity. I mumbled that he might, and we moved away from the glitter of the window.

"How are you liking it as far as you've gone?" he asked me.

I thought of the hospital where I had been all the afternoon. It seemed to me that carbolized whiffs must emanate from me. I thought of the glimpses of suffering humanity lying upon the free ward cots, of the stretchers rolling darling experimenters toward the final test of life in the operating rooms; I thought of the narrow, crowded streets that lay west of us, the oppression of which had borne so heavily upon me earlier in the day; I thought of my own small room, of my scanty resources, and of the general friendlessness and forlornness of life.

"I hate it," I replied, with unnecessary brevity and vehemence. Then I was sorry for the frank revelation of myself, and I attempted to hedge.

"I mean that it's lonely, and I have time to be homesick. I don't know many people yet, except the people in my house, and I haven't been busy enough to keep me from—from—oh, general disgruntlement."

"It seems that your good angel as well as mine arranged our meeting, then," he said. "I knew that mine was looking out for me when I caught a glimpse of you—at least, as soon as you consented to recognize me. But if you're a victim of nostalgia—that's the fancy name for the homesick dumps, isn't it?—perhaps I can help you banish them. Have you any engagement to-night, Miss Berwick?"

Engagement! To buy a bottle of household ammonia at the druggist's after I had eaten my dinner humbly at the Margaret Louisa!

"No," I said.

"I am in luck. Won't you dine with me? Please do"—I had hesitated. "It will be a real work of mercy. I'm as stranded as you are for the time being. None of my people are back yet, and I will not go to the club and be bored by the vacation yarns of a set of men. Besides"—for I think he saw that I was not strongly moved by the appeal to my charitable instincts—"Mrs. Hennen particularly charged me to look out for you if I saw you. She would never forgive me if I had to report to her that I had met you in a most melancholic mood, and had let you go home to read sad poetry to yourself all the evening. You know she has a great admiration for you."

"She's awfully good," I murmured, gratefully. "Is she back yet?"

"No, they're at Lenox still. I came down from there yesterday. But you will come? Yes? Ah, that's good. Let's see, where shall it be? Where have you been dining, Miss Berwick?"

"At the Margaret Louisa," I replied.

"The Margaret Louisa? I don't seem to remember it. Where is it?"

"You couldn't remember it," I as-

sured him. "It's a very exclusive place, and there's one qualification for admission which you lack."

"I know I'm not very good," he laughed. "But how would the people at the—what's the name of the place?—Margaret Louisa know that? The cloven hoof, I flatter myself, is very discreetly hidden in me."

"It's not that. It's because you're not a woman. The Margaret Louisa maintains an excellent restaurant for self-supporting women who have not achieved the price of meals at a more opulent place. That is where I have dined chiefly."

"You unfortunate girl! We shall go to the liveliest dining place in town to compensate you for what you must have been through."

"I don't look—exactly harmonious with a very lively scene," I demurred.

"You look very charming," he assured me, with an air so grave, remote and impersonal that I felt the sudden stiffening of my spine to be an unnecessary and probably provincial bit of resentment. "And, anyway, at this place one sees absolutely every variety of costume, and at this season, of course, anything goes."

"Very well," I yielded the situation. "It's you who will suffer, not I. I don't know three people in the city, and so I have no shame about my appearance."

He looked down the brilliant avenue to where a clock sent an electric message to the world.

"It isn't six yet," he said. "Suppose we take a hansom and drive through the park for an hour."

We have no hansoms in Agonquitt, not even a station hack. A stranger descending upon us unheralded either walks to his destination or sits on a barrel in Powderley's store while that enterprising grocer "hitches up" to carry him thence. Consequently the etiquette of the hansom was unknown to me, and I stepped into one for a drive through the park with Mr. Archibald Charter, blissfully unconscious of my heinous offense against Mrs. Grundy of New York.

I have never had the heart to regret the indiscretion. The early evening was violet-tinted, and pierced with lights of silver and gold. In the park the damp air gave a heavy tang to the odor of the dying leaves. The beat of the horses' hoofs upon the roadways, the glimpse of lights across meadow stretches vaguely guessed in the dusk, the clumps of trees, the lights of other cabs rolling gently through the twilight, the wonderful misty effulgence of the broken skyline beyond the park glimpsed now and then as we whirled along—all these to a dispirited country girl more than paid for the sense of imprudence which she might have had had she known more.

Mr. Charter was a sympathetic companion for such a drive. He seemed to divine the right moments for silence. He effaced himself and left the charm of the evening to exert its restful influence almost unhindered; so that when we emerged from the quiet of the trees into the blare and glare of the city again I was rested and eager for the new experience of a really gay New York restaurant.

I had it. It was Curate's to which he took me—fairly radiant with rose light, the walls wonders of dark red and gold. The great room was divided by pillars, and railed-in galleries half concealed groups of semi-retired tables. A band discoursed sweetly, and through the brilliant scene moved beings who seemed a part of it, whose gowns diffused light as lustrous as the red-shaded globes around the wall, whose jewels flashed and glittered like the twinkling lamps outside, whose silks vied in rustling music with the orchestra. Even my unaccustomed eyes were able to take correct gauge of many of the diners. Bleached hair had never been seen in Agonquitt, but I recognized it when I saw it at Curate's. The work of the rouge pot and of the blacking pencil was also patent to me. I was a little horrified at first. But after the first blinding effect of the dazzle had passed, I was able to discern numbers of less gaudy parties watching the scene from various tables with an expression of

half-amused, half-appraising, well-bred insolence. Then I felt better. Apparently, as Mr. Charter was even then assuring me, all kinds of people came to Curate's, and it was part of one's New York education to come at least once.

The dinner convinced me that I had never before known what food was. Evidently my host was past master in the art of ordering. Everything was delicious, and there was not too much. At other tables I saw men and women wading through endless courses. It seemed to me that they must choke from excessive food and drink, and I am sure that the humble digestive processes flushed their faces and dulled their eyes. But Mr. Charter's was a more exquisite hospitality. The wine stimulated and did not dull, the food piqued the palate and satisfied without satiating.

His conversation—I had never heard anything like it before. He had been everywhere, seen everything, it seemed to me. He told me stories of Japan, and stories of Montana. He flattered by constant appeal to my knowledge of life. He paid open compliments, too, to be sure, but in a matter-of-course way which made it impossible to stop them without appearing a self-conscious goose. Yet for all their air of offhand frankness, the memory of them remained with me.

A good many people—prosperous-looking men, not unlike himself in their air of familiarity with material good things—spoke to him. Two or three came to the table and stood talking for a few minutes. They eyed me with an air of impertinent curiosity which whipped the blood into my cheeks. But he managed to get rid of them quietly and unobtrusively and without the introduction which I dreaded instinctively when they approached. We didn't know in the country that the haphazard introduction is "out."

We were almost through dinner when one of these turned away from our table in evident annoyance. His own was the table behind us, and as he rejoined his companions one of them

said in a tone loud enough to be heard: "Didn't manage it, did you, old fellow?"

"Didn't manage what?" snarled our recent visitor.

"To find out who Charter's queen of curds and cream is," was the prompt retort. "Pretty little Phyllis, isn't she?"

I was very angry, but there was nothing for me to do but conceal my wrath and pretend I had not overheard. Mr. Charter looked at me, an apology evidently trembling on his lips. Then when he saw that I was going to ignore the scene, he smiled in evident satisfaction.

"You're very kind, Miss Berwick," he said. "Green's an ass, and he's been drinking too much."

"I think I should like to go now," I answered, somewhat brusquely, and in a few minutes more another hansom had engulfed us and we were rolling down toward Eleventh Street.

By the time we drew up in front of Dr. Lyons', my annoyance had vanished, dissipated by the tact of my host. I heard with real satisfaction his genial "You've been awfully good to a stranded man, Miss Berwick; we'll do it again, will we not?"

He stood on the step with me while opening the door. There was no vestibule in Dr. Lyons' house, but the front door gave directly upon the hall, so Theresa Putnam, standing by the hall table and looking at the letters which

lay there, was visible to us. She turned at the sound of the opening door and saw me with Mr. Charter upon the step, and beyond us the lights of the waiting hansom. Of course her eyes were immediately averted to the mail again; nevertheless, when I had entered and closed the door behind me, I thought there was rather a curious light in her eyes as she turned toward me. I felt impelled to explain. I found myself remarking with an elaborate air which I tried in vain to make casual that I had been dining at Curate's with Mr. Charter, Mr. Hennen's partner.

"Curate's?" I was sure that there was slight disapproval as well as surprise in her voice. "Mr. Hennen's partner?"

"And brother-in-law," I amended. "You know the Hennens are all Agon-quitt people." Her face seemed to clear.

"Oh, I didn't know that," she said. "Here are some letters for you, and, oh—this card must be yours."

It was Bob Matthews' card. I had a brief feeling of disappointment, but I put it down. Bob had neglected me lately, I thought; I was glad that I had not been at home when at last he did make up his mind to call on me. I went upstairs humming a tune. By and by, when it caught my ear and my attention, I wondered where I had heard it. Then I remembered that it was something the band in the red-and-gold gallery had been playing that evening.



A PRAYER

LET me remember that I failed,
So I may not forget
How dear that goal the distance veiled
Toward which my feet were set.

Let me forget, if so Thy will,
How fair the joy desired,
Dear God, so I remember still
That one day I aspired.

THEODOSIA GARRISON.



THE SECOND BEST

By
Eleanor A. Hallowell



MAN and a woman sat in an alcoved café one winter night, amid wine and music and warmth and color, and discussed the arid feasibility of marriage without love.

It was no boy-and-girl conversation of glittering idealism and fantastic innocence, but a real, live, naked, straightforward talk, such as may happen without panic once in a lifetime to the right man and the right woman.

"Do you believe in love?" the man had asked, quite suddenly, with a whimsical intonation that marked his question at once as being a thoughtful one.

His companion hesitated for a second, and crumbled the bread at her plate; then she looked up and laughed.

"Believe in love!" she exclaimed. "No, I don't! That is, not exactly—that is—I believe in *love*, but not in *true love*."

"Oh!" said the man, and piled his plate unconsciously high with all the potato in the dish.

The woman looked out across the beautiful room with a frown of concentration and a tremor of intensity, then she turned back impetuously to the man and tried to explain herself.

"You ask if I believe in love? No! No! Emphatically, *no*! But, to be equally honest, I did believe in it once. Once. Bah!"

"What happened?" quizzed the man, with a friendly little laugh.

The woman threw out her hands with a gesture of scorn.

"What happened?" she repeated, mockingly. "What happened? Why, it

died, of course—*died*. Isn't that proof enough that it never existed?"

The man looked down into her angry eyes with a curious, twisted smile. "Oh, you poor, foolish, illogical woman!" he said. "You claim that love never existed because it died. Yet you have a mother who died, haven't you? Would you get up and swear that *she* never existed? Would you get up and brand *her* as a paltry thing because the stresses of existence were too much for her?"

The woman sank back with a little wilted air of defeat, and then rallied herself suddenly into a dimpling vivacity that brought a reflected light into the man's dark eyes.

"You are a clever, clever man," she teased. "In fact, you are quite the cleverest man I know; but, just in passing, tell me honestly—do you believe in love yourself?"

The man flushed, and his eyes shifted for a second. Then he shook his shoulders and looked the woman straight in the face.

"No, I don't," he acknowledged, reluctantly. "No, I don't; but it hurts me furiously to think that *you* don't."

"Who is illogical now?" laughed the woman.

"Not I," said the man. "When you say you don't believe in love, you think you have wiped the whole fact of it off the earth. You might just as reasonably say that no woman in the world has brown eyes, just because you haven't. But when I say I don't believe in love, I speak just as I would about a man whom I distrust. You ask if I believe in him? I say 'no.' I don't mean that he doesn't exist, but that he doesn't exist for *me*. Some happy fool

is welcome to believe in him. I somehow hoped that you were one of the happy fools."

"Well, I'm not," snapped the woman, with joking petulance. "I'm one of the unhappy wise ones."

"You flatter yourself," said the man, with twinkling eyes; and handed her ostentatiously a great bouquet of crisp white celery.

She pushed his joke aside, and slapped childishly at his hand. Then she drew her chair a little closer to the table, and leaned a trifle confidently toward the man.

"I am just impertinent enough tonight," she pleaded, "to want to know what taught you *your* love lesson. Would you hate me if I asked?"

The man laughed, not unpleasantly. "You're a funny little woman," he said; "a bit more audacious than the law allows, but I rather like audacity. You want to know my story? It isn't astoundingly vital, but, such as it is, you are welcome to it." He shut his eyes for a moment, and pondered. There was puzzle in his face, but no pain. He brought the facts out of his memory haphazardly, as a man might unpack his boyhood's trunk. There were memory and sentiment involved, but no practical usefulness.

"I'm forty years old," he declaimed, in a semi-serious, confessional manner, "and I've only had two happenings in my life that you women would call 'love affairs.'"

"When I was but twenty-one I loved to distraction a beautiful little girl of about my own age. She jilted me rather brutally at the end of a year. I got her wedding cards before I even knew that our own engagement was broken.

"What's that you say? That my cynicism began early? Oh, Lord, no! Her brutality hurt me a lot, but it wasn't exactly a love hurt. It's only when a woman hurts you a little that it's a love hurt. Let her only hurt you enough, let her only fail you utterly, and you can become quite comfortably convinced that she wasn't the right woman. No man really wants anyone but the right

woman. Of course I went pretty lame and sore for a few years, but I didn't make a general grudge against all women, any more than, if a horse had maimed me, would I have made a grudge against all horses. I simply let women alone for a long, long while, though Heaven knows I was no cynic about it. It was the second woman who made a cynic of me."

"Oh!" exclaimed his companion, leaning a little more eagerly on the table. "Oh, did she treat you badly, too? What could she have done that was worse than the first one?"

Her clear gray eyes were soft with sympathy, but dilated suddenly at the change in the man's face. He had grown in an instant gray and dogged-looking and driven, with the furtive glance of one who wrestles rather strenuously with a lie. She had seen that same furtiveness of expression a dozen times in his face during their year's friendship, but she had never yet seen his actual truthfulness defeated.

"What did she do to treat you badly?" she repeated, quite gently, but with a tense, definite aim, like the throwing of a lifeline.

The man clutched almost eagerly at her second question.

"What did she do to treat me badly? She didn't do anything. She didn't treat me badly at all. It was I who treated *her* badly. Oh, you needn't wince! It's a clean story enough, but it's a mean, unpleasant one. I wish you hadn't ask me, but as long as you have, I'd rather die than not tell you. Only, don't go round reviling love because love failed *you*. Wait till *you* fail love before you set yourself up as a hopeless, damnable cynic. Am I melodramatic? I don't mean to be, but the story stirs up devils.

"It was when I was thirty that I met the second girl. She was twenty-four or five, and everything beautiful and idealistic that you could imagine. She was perfect—character, looks, manner, everything. She was altogether one of those thoughts that you think, as Stevenson would say, 'on summer Sundays when the church bells ring.' She was

not easy to win. There were a dozen men better than I who were in love with her, but, somehow, she favored me. After months of stress and anxiety I won her promise of marriage. It was the proudest, happiest, wildest moment of my life. Then almost simultaneously with the announcement of our engagement I was called to Europe on business. I was gone four months. When I returned—Heaven knows what had happened to me in those four months, but I found in the first flash of greeting that I no longer loved her. And I had to tell her so. All in a second, as it were, I lost enthusiasm, impetus, desire. Things went stale! In short, I found myself bored abjectly with her perfections.

"There are men who would have said: 'You must keep your bond, even so.' I do not agree with them. You cannot fool a woman very long about love. And, at best, a woman hazards too much in marriage to be married under any false pretenses.

"I told her that I did not love her any more. It was not a pretty bit of news. Never mind how she took it. This story concerns only what happened to me. She broke our engagement, of course, and I—went to the devil for a while.

"Everybody who tried to pull me back argued: 'Don't go to the devil just because you have lost faith in *one* woman. There are plenty of others.'

"There might be plenty of other women, but the fact remained that there was only one myself. I couldn't explain that the reason I was going to the devil was because I had lost faith in myself. I couldn't proclaim to a gossiping world that it was I who had jilted *her*. People still hold her responsible for my temporary downfall and my permanent bitterness. It is part of my punishment to hear her blamed, and yet I know that she would rather be blamed to the uttermost than have the world know that I had simply tired of her.

"There you have the story of my disbelief in love. There you have the whole secret truth of my notorious cyn-

icism. The first affair was nothing. It left me practically unembittered. She was the wrong woman, and she merely proved herself a trifling thing. But what of the right woman, who came and proved *me* the most trifling of all trifling things! God, but there was ignominy for you! It's a fretful thing to be cheated by some one in the open market, but it's worse yet to find that all your own spending money in the world is counterfeit.

"The first woman never gave me the best that was in her. That is perfectly plain and logical and sequent. But I know absolutely and positively, as I never knew anything else in my life, that I gave the second woman everything that was best and whitest in my nature, the complete fullness of my power of love—I gave her all that, and in the very act of giving the gift turned to dust and ashes and worse than nothingness. If she had failed me, you see, I might yet have hoped for another love. But I failed her, and there is no other myself.

"There, I have made you cry. What a rotten story! I oughtn't to have told it you, anyway, but you made me so everlastingly tired with your cursing of love for what you couldn't *get*. Just suppose you had to curse it for what you couldn't *give*! But, never mind, it all comes to the same end. We neither of us believe in love. Let it go at that."

"What do you believe in?" prodded the woman, through her tears.

"I believe in God," said the man, "but I don't want to talk about it."

"But worldly things, I mean," the woman persisted; "tangible things."

The man scowled at her quite ferociously for a second, and then began to laugh.

"The results be on your own head," he warned her. "What do I believe in? I believe in fate, and luck, and sex." His eyes flared up with a gleam of boyish daredeviltry. "I believe fate is the thing that you *know* will overtake you if you dally on life's railroad tracks. I believe luck is the thing, good or bad, that *may* happen to you on life's unex-

plored bypath. And sex? Heaven help us, who can define sex? Surely not I." He leaned suddenly forward and lowered his voice momentarily. "Surely not I, who have brought you here to-night without any pretense of love, yet all determined to ask you to marry me."

As though a giant's open palm had slapped her face, the woman jumped back with her cheeks flaming, and the flesh about her lips quivering and whimpering with the shock, but her eyes looked out undaunted at the man.

"What do you mean?" she gasped.

Then the darky waiter came with a great clattering of dishes to change the courses, and the man and woman bent their heads together over the choice of a salad, and ran into flippant conversation over the best month for water-cress, and a discussion of brooks and childish wading experiences, so that it was not until the leisurely coffee came that the two were alone again with the woman's embarrassment.

The woman made a great pretense of ceremony over the pouring of the coffee, while the man watched her with amused patience, puffing all the while at his most fragrant cigar. With nervous fingers she drilled the two little cups, the gleaming coffee pot and the sugar bowl into line, as though they comprised a regiment, and when she felt the man's eyes too strongly upon her she looked up and defied his seriousness.

"It always seems to me like playing child's tea party again to be fooling with such little dishes," she said, in casual words, but with trembling intonation.

"Don't talk about being *children*!" exclaimed the man, sharply, raising one hand instinctively to his forehead. "I can actually *feel* the gray in my hair."

"It's pretty hair," she acknowledged.

The man gave a vicious tweak to the lock on his forehead.

"I'd like some other touch on it beside Time's," he muttered, gruffly.

Then he laughed and put down his cigar, and folded his hands very resolutely on the table.

"I certainly do like you a lot," he persisted. "Will you marry me?"

"No, I *won't*," said the woman, and shrank back into her corner, and began to play distractedly with her gloves.

"Why not?" probed the man, his eyes a strange mixture of intensity and laughter.

The woman looked out across the flare of lights and colors with a whimsical curiosity about the comedies and tragedies that the other women were talking with the other men, and it was quite five minutes before she looked back at her companion. When she did look at him the expression in her face drove all the amusement out of his eyes.

"I won't marry you," she said, with careful deliberation; "I won't marry you—because—I—don't—love—you."

The man gave an impatient gesture of dissent that jostled his coffee cup into an ugly stain across the cloth.

"There you go again," he exclaimed, "with your absolutely foolish and illogical conclusions. One minute you swear that you don't believe in love at all, and the next minute you get up and declare that you won't marry me because you don't love me. It's absurd."

The woman's eyes blurred quickly with tears, and she made a little pleading gesture toward the man.

"I can't argue logically with you to-night. Perhaps I'm tired. I can't ever seem to argue logically with you. I'm brainy and independent enough out in the world, but the very sight of you takes it all out of me. I don't love you a bit, but you make me feel like such a *wasted* woman. The very sight and sound of you makes me realize—if I can say it without seeming to boast—makes me realize how much, how very much, I could have given to the right man."

"It was the *wastedness* of us that I was thinking of," mused the man, very gently, and sat and puffed and puffed and puffed at his cigar until the moments grew as long as weeks. Not till the woman began to cough and choke with the smoke did he come back to conversational consciousness.

"I have made you cry twice to-night," he said, "and I had no right to do it. What I want, what I ask, is the *right* to make you cry." He smiled whimsically.

"I won't give it to you," retorted the woman, answering him smile for smile.

"But that is where you defeat the best thing for both of us," protested the man. "I can make you cry any time, whether or no, with or without your consent, but if you give me the *right* to make you cry, I acquire a certain moral responsibility in the matter, and an equally moral responsibility to comfort you, and to protect you always from other men's hurts."

The woman's face lighted up with amused appreciation of the fancy, and the man pursued his advantage.

"I've thought a lot about it," he reasoned, "and I don't see why a full-grown man and woman who like each other might well couldn't afford to snap their fingers over the lost illusions of love, and combine their mere likes into a very decent semblance of happiness. You hear a lot of stuff about life without love being a desert, but, I declare, people have made bully good homes in deserts before now. As far as I can make out, it takes a good deal of sand and grit to make any home happy. Wouldn't you be willing to try the experiment—with me?"

"No, I don't think I should," said the woman, thoughtfully.

"Would you be willing to talk about the matter?" the man persisted.

"Yes," consented the woman. "I'm quite willing to talk about it. It's an interesting subject. Every man and woman has considered it."

"Drat their consideration of it!" exclaimed the man, petulantly. "When I say *talk* about it I *mean* talk about it. I don't want to skip the subject the way children skip rope. I'd like to discuss marriage with you—grown-up, unromantic marriage. I'm forty years old—I think you said you were thirty-three. I like you better than any woman I know. I like your good looks. I like your mentality. I like your pride and fire. You've got more

life in you than any woman I ever saw. I like what you stand for. I'd like to know what a woman just like you thinks at thirty-three about marriage. I've never met a woman before that I wanted to ask that question of. I've never met a woman before that I would dare to ask it of. But you—you've got a man's honor, a man's sincerity, a man's seriousness. I not only care what you think, but I believe what you say. Men don't talk this way often to women. There's no dare before marriage, and no care afterward. If you'll sit there and take what I have to say to you, I'd like to say it. But it won't be any 'hide and go seek' or 'puss in the corner' conversation. You are perfectly welcome to hate me when I get through with it, but I don't want you to go flaunting out with flaming cheeks in the middle of it. Do you understand?"

"Yes," said the woman; "I understand perfectly, and I'm not afraid."

The man lowered his voice.

"Will you let me talk to you as freely as if *you* were a man?"

"Yes."

"And will you answer me as honestly as if *I* were a woman?"

"Yes." The flesh about her lips quivered for a second, but her eyes smiled up with almost a twinkle into his.

Then the man went back to the puff, puff, puff of his cigar, and turned his chair out toward the big room, as though his questions and answers alike lay there in the whirl and noise and gayety. It was a long time before he turned round again and spoke.

"I've known you a year," he said, at last, very deliberately; "a little more than a year, perhaps. It's been mighty nice to find you in the office every morning, but it's been dawning on me all of a sudden, lately, that I'd much rather find you waiting for me at home at night. I don't suppose it's love. Say it isn't love. Call it *sex*. The fact remains that it is an honest, legitimate thing. To come right down to the fine point, I suppose it's merely a primal desire to get 'my share of the world.' Sex is the biggest, almightiest theory

of existence, and love is nothing more nor less than the first personal application of that theory. Love, in short, is nothing but the noise of new machinery. Drat the racket! But *real* living—that's another matter. Wouldn't you like to see the entirety of life? Will you shut your eyes to the cataract and the cathedral, to the splendor and the miracle, just because you fear you can no longer drop dead with ecstasy at the sight? Isn't it enough that I, a man, need you, a woman? Isn't it enough that I want to make a home for *you*, and want *you*, and none other, to make a home for *me*?

"When you come to die, and the Almighty asks you if it was a good life, if you really enjoyed it, do you think it will be pleasant to stand up and confess that you don't know whether it was a good life or not; that, as a matter of fact, you were rather afraid to live it, not feeling perfectly certain that the Almighty's scheme of existence for men and women was quite the best thing?"

"You may call me greedy, if you like, but I'm not a bit ashamed to acknowledge that I want and hope to get every good gift that life has to offer. I've had my childhood, with its father and mother love; I've had my rollicking boyhood and my eager young manhood. Now I want marriage. Other men have it; I want it! I tell you I want my whole share of life, and when the time comes to die, please God, I'll die just as dead as any other man, and go to the same place, and be just as much or just as nothing. But, please God, I hope I'll never have to stand up and say that I don't *know* whether it was a good life or not!

"But, seriously, couldn't you stand the thought of liking me only a little? I don't see why a woman needs to love a man to distraction before she's willing to wait in the hallway at twilight, all warm and sweet and silk-lined, for his home-coming. I've got a dozen rollicking friends in the business world, but I'm tired at night, and—I want a friend at *home*. Suppose I didn't come with paeans of praise and

hymns of gladness and ecstatic offerings of myrrh and frankincense—I'll wager I'd be pretty glad to get home just the same!"

"Warm—and sweet—and silk-lined—in the twilight," mused the woman. "You don't ask *very* much." She gave her knees a mischievous rustle. "I'm silk-lined now."

"But would you—wait for me in the twilight?" asked the man, trenchantly.

All in a second the woman's smoldering, torturing question leaped to flame on her lips:

"To wait in the twilight? Would—that—be—all—you asked of me?"

The color ebbed in agony from her lips, and rose like a tidal wave in the man's rugged face. The noisy room seemed suddenly to her like a wadded silence, with her own heart crashing shrilly like metal on metal. Yet the man's eyes faltered before hers did.

"What would you want?" she whispered. "What would you ask for? What would—you—take?"

The man turned on her like a tiger, but his eyes were clear and bright and steadfast with his immortality.

"I would *take* only what you chose to give me. I would ask absolutely nothing. But it is God's own truth, and there's no use denying it. I should want and hope for everything in the world that you have to give."

"Without—*love*?" she gasped, shivering.

"Damn love!" said the man.

She reached up her hands to shut out the blasphemy, but the man's surprising laugh stopped the gesture. He leaned his elbows on the table and began to smoke again.

"Great Scott!" he argued. "People don't have to marry to talk politics and philosophy, or to read books together, or to sit up till twelve, or to dine at cafés. It's because people want more than that that they marry. It's because I certainly want very much more than that that I am now asking you to marry me. I'm not a romantic boy. I'm not demanding for a second that you should thrill with girlish sentiment at the mere thought of me, but I am willing to fall

back for happiness on the supreme theory of existence concerning man and woman's joyous dependence on each other. The Lord knew what He was doing when He made the bond of man and woman a blended bond of flesh and spirit. If one strand fails, there's a blessed chance that the other strand will hold. Did you ever stop to define ideal love to yourself?"

"Oh, yes!" said the woman. "But your definition is better. What you suggest is quite true. Love is a mystical blend of sympathy and passion."

"Well?" said the man, triumphantly.

The woman flushed. "But it's the mystical, unknown proportion of the blend that makes it love," she protested. "Nobody could just sit up and create love. They don't know how. Don't you see, *they don't know how!*"

The man shrugged his shoulders desiriously.

"If I was starving on a desert island," he said, and he bit his words viciously—"if I was starving on a desert island, with a jug of water and six raisins, and you were starving to death on the same island, with a package of flour and no recipe, wouldn't we be two blankety-blanked fools if we couldn't mix up an original little concoction of our own that should be amazingly palatable and delectable, not to say life-saving? Suppose we *ought* to have had *seven* raisins instead of six; suppose we really needed only half the quantity of flour; suppose we had to sit on the bare ground and scoop up the food with our fingers, and lick the dish to get enough; but suppose, as I say, that we both had been starving on that desert island, don't you think that meal would seem like the bulkiest, picnickest thing that had ever happened to us in our lives? I tell you, it's the ingredients that count, not the recipe!"

"You'd make a dandy cook!" scoffed the woman, but her tense little body relaxed perceptibly.

"It's always seemed to me," continued the man, "that marriage without love might be very picturesque and interesting if you got the *right* wrong man and woman together."

A flash of congenial sentiment lit up the woman's face.

"I agree with you there," she acknowledged. "No youthful romance with mutual cupids and kisses has ever thrilled me as has a well-written story of a loveless or unwilling marriage. The vitalities of the situation are so tremendous, the smallest episodes so unflaggingly significant. I guess I am a sensationalist at heart."

"I would do my best," said the man, smilingly, "to make your marriage with me as picturesque and interesting as you chose to have it. We will make it a story, if you like, and name it 'With Love Left Out'; or, better still, make it a drama—without an audience—and play all around the edges of life's big issues, as they do on the stage."

"Just our marriage itself would be a fine start-off from a sensational point of view. Only think how astonished our friends would be. I could find considerable satisfaction in that one fact alone."

"You'd better marry me. I dare say I should be a bit clumsy at first, but your feelings would never be ravaged like a real sweetheart if I did the wrong thing. Perhaps I should never really tune myself to your spiritual level, but, even so, I could still bring you every reasonable material comfort that a man could give a woman. It's a boyish thing to say, but, do you know, I actually crave the right to pay your bills. I would really like to hear you ask me for money. I'd like the whole primitive realization that I owned you. You'd better marry me. We'd have good times together. You could teach me all the things that you know better than I, and I could teach you all the things that I know better than you, and we could play together day in day out—there never could be any better playmates. Music, theaters, dinners, or just *home*; and you shall be—nothing but the dainty, gracious hostess of my life until that day when you shall come of your own accord and—ask—to be *more—or—less.*"

"Would my choice be quite free?" whispered the woman.

"Absolutely," said the man. "But I am staking everything on my belief in what your ultimate decision will be. It is only fair to tell you that. Nor could I promise to be so patient if I did not also believe that you are too fine and brave a woman to dally wantonly with a man's life. It will not take you months and months to find yourself."

"I am not brave," said the woman, "and I think I am proving here and now a very wanton propensity to dally with a man's life; but there is something more that itches and aches to be said. If I go away without saying it I shall always feel that the argument was incomplete—and we shall hardly reopen the subject again." Her voice sank to an almost inaudible whisper.

"It is about—children." Her chin went up as though to receive a blow. "I am afraid of—children." Then she began to pluck nervously at a wilted rose on the table. "You have been very honest with me; I want to be—honest with you. Perhaps you wanted— *I am afraid of children!*" The tears began to gather in her eyes, and she made a pitiful little gesture to hide them.

"Oh, don't talk about it!" said the man. "For Heaven's sake, don't talk about it! What do I care? I wasn't thinking about children at all—I don't care anything about them—except as any man might casually crave to build a little play room in his house of life. Don't talk about it—dear."

His voice was like an imperative caress, and the woman shook herself free from it with a gesture of defiance and resentment.

"I wasn't talking about *us* at all," she insisted, with quickened breath. "I was thinking about all the men and women in the world, and I have *got* to talk about it once—just once for all my lifetime. It is like this:

"People—old women—catch us when we are very young and fill our ears with tales of the agony and torture of childbirth, until the Crucifixion itself could not seem more brutal. Then we grow up and forget all about it until—we fall in love. And then, perhaps, there is one tiniest flash of a second when we

would be willing to suffer and die and think it all a glorious sort of sacrifice. After that it all goes. And when a woman has been out in the world as I have—oh, ten years—she rather loses her maternal instinct. I don't mean her ardor and passion of life—thank God I have enough of that—but her desire and ability to be sentimentally pleased with maternity. My ten years' strait of mental life and excitement has left me just as incapable as you are of being satisfied to sit at home all day and watch a baby crawl across the floor. It does not appeal to me. I can imagine, even only liking you a little, that I might learn to watch for your homecoming with a considerable thrill of expectation; but I cannot even imagine the enthusiastic acceptance of maternity. It seems to me that a woman would have to love either a man or children very much indeed to accept with happiness the long, heavy waiting and the anguish. I do—not—care—very—much—for children."

Her mood changed suddenly. The tense look passed, and the color came splurging back to her cheeks. She turned and poured out a clammily cold cup of coffee, and swallowed it brusquely without satisfaction. Then she reached for the first time to the shimmering warmth and glow of her cordial glass, and across its tiny rim of defense her eyes grew very bright and subtle and tantalizing.

"I am just a besieged city," she said. "You've no idea what a starved, frozen, foolishly desolate little city I am. But the fact remains that I am myself, and want to stay myself. I haven't the slightest intention in the world of surrendering to any foreign foe in general, nor to you in particular; and yet—I am so starved and cold and altogether desolate that I like to stoop down from my turrets and listen to the merciful things you would do for me if I did surrender. You understand? I never mean to give in, but the *thought of surrender* is the only food and warmth and comfort that I have in the world. Lots of brainy women are made like that. I wouldn't give in to save

my life; but I could go almost mad wondering about the things I've missed.

"Take your hand off mine—the waiter is staring at us."

"He'll stare a heap sight harder before this conversation is over," said the man, bitterly, but he withdrew his hand, and lit another cigar.

The woman blew against her fingers mockingly, and held them up to the flickering warmth of the red-shaded candle, and struggled to regain her flippancy.

"Suppose," she ventured at last—"suppose I should take the menu, like this, and a pencil, like this, and scribble across the top of it: 'All right, I am willing to try your experiment,' and push the paper across to you, like this, what—would—you—do—with me? Are you ready to take me instantly into your life, before I have had time to see the folly of my decision?" Her eyes gleamed recklessly.

The man snatched at the scribbled message and crumpled it in his hands. "What should I do with you? If I took you and *beat* you I wouldn't be as cruel to you as you are to me this very second, setting fire to my imagination just for the fun of seeing the sparks fly."

"It's the only way I know to get warm," faltered the woman.

The man took out his watch and slapped it down on the table beside him. "This café closes in half an hour, but we won't go out of this place dead or alive until this matter is settled." He drew his chair in closer to the table, and leaned across until the woman felt she was crowded into the smallest corner in the world.

"You ask what I should do with you?" he reiterated. "I would do this with you: I would take you out of the wear and tear and stress and storm of your everyday life, and carry you off to a restful, peaceful place and make a home of you."

"Of me?" said the woman.

"Yes, of you," persisted the man. "What else should a man want of a woman but *home*? Warmth, and cheer,

and welcome, and rest, and wit, and daintiness."

"But my life is a home for myself now," protested the woman.

"An empty house without a master," said the man.

"But would you be kind to my life?" persisted the woman.

"I would make it the happiest home that ever existed. I swear it!" said the man.

"But with love left out," sighed the woman.

The man's face flushed with impotent anger, and he reached forward and grasped the woman's fingers as in a vise.

"See here, you are wasting your happiness and mine in idle sentimentalities! Ten years ago I failed love. Ten years ago love failed you. Does that mean that we are to go blind and lame and deaf and dumb all the rest of our lives? What was that love, anyway, for either of us but a gorgeous, fleeting illumination that flared up for one instant like a divine explosion, and was gone. It is good, perhaps, to have had that one blinding flash in which the heavens themselves were revealed, but suppose we *had* married the loves of our choice—where would we be now but groping our way around in the dark, with chilling hands and stale lips, trying to lash ourselves at anniversary time into the stuttering sentiment, 'How light it *used* to be!'

"What if winter does come every year, while there is only one spring and one summer in all your memory? What if the wildest thing you can say about dawn, or sunset, or blossom, or moonlight is that it is almost as good as the old dawn, the old sunset, the old moonlight, the old blossom? Even so, I would rather have your sweetness by my flickering hearthfire than the freshest ecstasy of moonlit blossoms. I would rather have your echo of my youth than youth itself!

"I am only a man, with a man's passions, a man's needs, a man's limitations. I cannot swear by things I never saw to love you till the judgment day. I can only pledge myself

on my own body that *I want you for my wife*. I can only pledge you on that same body to cherish you and protect you. If my limitations harass you, I will try to mend them. If my strength involves you in weakness, love or no love, I will not desert you or shirk you. If you refuse me children, it is enough that I have had you for my wife. If our life together does not bring you happiness, I will release you without ugliness or reproach.

"I would not ask you, feeling as we both do, to go to any church or clergyman and be put through the exquisitely beautiful perjury of the marriage service. It is a fearful thing. I have never thought that any man or woman ought to go away *with* the marriage service who does not love enough to go away *without* it. But if you will trust yourself to me with a sane, commonplace civil bond, I ask you for the gift of yourself.

"Such as I was, such as I am, such as I hope to be, *I want you for my wife!*"

There was a long silence—tense, cruel, foreboding; with all the antagonism of the sexes defiant and rampant. The present vanished, the past never existed, and time itself stood still and loomed up surcharged with tingling potentialities. It was war to the death, and until the edge of the very last second victory went to the woman. But in that last second something in the woman's vision snapped. She caught her breath suddenly, and, with a little gasp of agonized surprise, bent down swiftly and touched her lips to the rugged fingers that held her own so sternly. And the look in her eyes was very strange to see.

"The truth!" she cried. "The naked truth! You don't know it when you see it! You take the biggest truth in the world and catch it roughly and strip it boldly, and shut your dazzled eyes to the inner vision. You think that truth is naked when you have stripped it. It is not naked till you have *seen* it! Open your eyes, I say! *Open your eyes!*"

Then she drew her hands abruptly away and sat up very straight, and laughed. And there was passion in her laugh, and the victory of surrender, and pride and humility, and everything but mirth.

"What do you mean?" gasped the man, white-faced and breathless as at the end of a race, with the pulses in his temples throbbing like two engines.

"I mean," said the woman, tugging at her gloves—"I mean that you have taught me something that you did not know yourself! You have taught me that—you—*love*—me, and—that—I—love you. And if you say that it is not so, you lie, and you know that you lie!"

Then the waiter came with nervous, shambling apology, fluttering a bill.

"Excuse me, sah," he stammered, "but it's mos' twelve o'clock, and we've got to close."

"Let's go home," said the man. "I wish it was real home. Will you make it real home to-morrow, just as soon as I can get a marriage license? Will you *—to-morrow?*"

"Perhaps," laughed the woman. "Yes, perhaps. To-morrow is always such a long way off."

"It is to-morrow *now*," said the café clock, and in a second the ponderous tones of the City Hall bell affirmed the legality of the statement.

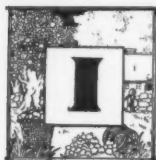
It was the man's turn now to laugh. "Oh, ho!" he said. "Isn't that proof enough that *this* is our wedding day?"

But still the woman lingered, with a tender, tingling sort of superstition, until at last a cautious, tremulous church chime rang out in distinct approval: "It is to-morrow now."

"It will be next day if we don't hurry," exclaimed the man; and the dark waiter stood by at the draughty door and thought how utterly cold and dark and cheerless a Northern winter night could be. But the man went out into the bleakness with his greatcoat swinging open, and the woman followed him with cheeks like roses, and her warm furs dragging in her ungloved hand.

HIS NATIVE HEATH

By JOSEPH CLINCOLN



NEVER could quite understand why the folks at Wellmouth made me selectman. I s'pose likely 'twas on account of Jonadab and me and Peter Brown makin' such a go of the Old Home House and turnin' Wellmouth Port from a sand fleas' paradise into a hospital where city folks could have their bank accounts amputated and not suffer more'n was necessary. Anyway, I was elected unanimous at town meetin', and Peter was mighty anxious for me to take the job.

"Barzilla," says Peter, "I jedge that a selectman is a sort of dwarf alderman. Now, I've had friends who've been aldermen, and they say it's a sure thing, like shakin' for the drinks with your own dice. If you're straight, there's the honor and the advertisement; if you're crooked, there's the graft. Either way the house wins. Go in, and glory be with you."

So I fin'ly agreed to serve, and the very first meetin' I went to the question of Asaph Bluworthy and the poorhouse comes up. Zoeth Tiddit—he was town clerk—he puts it this way:

"Gentlemen," he says, "we have here the usual application from Asaph Bluworthy for aid from the town. I don't know's there's much use for me to read it—it's toler'ble familiar. 'Sufferin' from lumbago and rheumatiz'—um, yes. 'Out of work'—um, jest so. 'Respectfully begs that the board will'—et-cetera and so forth. Well, gentlemen, what's your pleasure?"

Darius Gott, he speaks first, and dry and drawlin' as ever. "Out of work,

hey?" says Darius. "Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask if anybody here remembers the time when Ase was in work?"

Nobody did, and Cap'n Benijah Poundberry—he was chairman at that time—he fetches the table a welt with his starboard fist and comes out emphatic.

"Feller members," says he, "I don't know how the rest of you feel, but it's my opinion that this board has done too much for that lazy loafer already. Long's his sister, Thankful, lived, we couldn't say nothin', of course. If she wanted to slave and work so's her brother could live in idleness and sloth, why, that was her business. There ain't any law against a body's makin' a fool of herself, more's the pity. But she's been dead a year, and he's done nothin' since but live on those that'll trust him, and ask help from the town. He ain't sick—except sick of work. Now, it's my idea that, long's he's bound to be a pauper, he might's well be treated as a pauper. Let's send him to the poorhouse."

"But," says I, "he owns his place down there by the shore, don't he?"

All hands laughed—that is, all but Cap'n Benije. "Own nothin'," says the cap'n. "The whole rat trap, from the keel to maintruck, ain't worth more'n three hundred dollars, and I loaned Thankful four hundred on it years ago, and the mortgage fell due last September. Not a cent of principal, interest nor rent have I got since. Whether he goes to the poorhouse or not, he goes out of that house of mine to-morrer. A man can smite me on one cheek and maybe I'll turn t'other, but when, after

I *have* turned it, he finds fault 'cause my face hurts his hand, then I rise up and quit; you hear *me*!"

Nobody could help hearin' him, unless they was deefier than the feller that fell out of the balloon and couldn't hear himself strike, so all hands agreed that sendin' Asaph Blueworthy to the poorhouse would be a good thing. "Twould be a lesson to Ase, and would give the poorhouse one more excuse for bein' on earth. Wellmouth's a fairly prosperous town, and the paupers had died, one after the other, and no new ones had come, until all there was left in the poorhouse was old Betsy Mullen, who was down with creepin' palsy, and Deborah Badger, who'd been keeper ever since her husband died.

The poorhouse property was valuable, too, 'specially for a summer cottage, bein' out on the end of Robbin's Point, away from the town, and havin' a fine view right across the bay. Zoeth Tid-dit was a committee of one with power from the town to sell the place, but he hadn't found a customer yet. And if he did sell it, what to do with Debby was more or less of a question. She'd kept poorhouse for years, and had no other home nor no relations to go to. Everybody liked her, too—that is, everybody but Cap'n Benajah. He was down on her 'cause she was a Spiritualist and believed in fortune tellers and such. The cap'n, bein' a deacon of the Come-Outer persuasion, was naturally down on folks who wasn't broad-minded enough to see that his partic'lar crack in the roof was the only way to crawl through to glory.

Well, we voted to send Asaph to the poorhouse, and then I was appointed a delegate to see him and tell him he'd got to go. I wasn't enthusiastic over the job, but everybody said I was exactly the feller for the place.

"To tell you the truth," drawls Darius, "you, bein' a stranger, are the only one that Ase couldn't talk over. He's got a tongue that's buttered on both sides and runs on ball bearin's. If I should see him he'd work on my sympathies till I'd lend him the last two-cent piece in my baby's bank."

"So, as there wa'n't no way out of it, I drove down to Asaph's that afternoon. He lived off on a side road by the shore, in a little, run-down shanty that was as no account as he was. When I moored my horse to the "heavenly-wood" tree by what was left of the fence, I would have bet my sou'wester that I caught a glimpse of Brother Blueworthy peekin' round the corner of the house. But when I turned that corner there was nobody in sight, although the bu'sted wash-bench, with a cranberry crate proppin' up its lame end, was shakin' a little, as if some one had set on it recent.

I knocked on the door, but nobody answered. After knockin' three or four times I tried kickin', and the second kick raised, from somewheres inside, a groan that was as lonesome a sound as ever I heard. No human noise in my experience come within a mile of it for dead, downright misery—unless, maybe, it's Cap'n Jonadab tryin' to sing in meetin' Sundays.

"Who's that?" wails Ase from t'other side of the door. "Did anybody knock?"

"Knock!" says I. "I all but kicked your everlastin' derelict out of water. It's me, Wingate—one of the selectmen. Tumble up, there! I want to talk to you."

Blueworthy didn't exactly tumble, so's to speak, but the door opened, and he comes shufflin' and groanin' into sight. His face was twisted up and he had one hand spread-fingered on the small of his back.

"Dear, dear!" says he. "I'm dreadful sorry to have kept you waitin', Mr. Wingate. I've been wrastlin' with this turrible lumbago, and I'm 'fraid it's affectin' my hearin'. I'll tell you—"

"Yes—well, you needn't mind," I says; "'cordin' to common tell, you was born with that same kind of lumbago, and it's been gittin' no better fast ever since. Jest drag your sufferin's out onto this bench and come to anchor. I've got considerable to say, and I'm in a hurry."

Well, he grunted, and groaned, and scuffled out along. When he'd got

planted on the bench he didn't let up any—kept on with the misery.

"Look here," says I, losin' patience, "when you git through with the Job business I'll heave ahead and talk. Don't let me interrupt the lamentations on no account. Finished? All right. Now, you listen to me."

And then I told him jest how matters stood. His house was to be seized on the mortgage, and he was to move to the poorhouse next day. You never see a man more surprised or worse cut up. Him to the poorhouse? *Him*—one of the oldest families on the cape? You'd think he was the Grand Panjandrum. Well, the dignity didn't work, so he commenced on the lumbago; and that didn't work, neither. But do you think he give up the ship? Not much; he commenced to explain why he hadn't been able to earn a livin' and the reasons why he'd ought to have another chance. Talk! Well, if I hadn't been warned he'd have landed *me*, all right. I never heard a better sermon nor one with more long words in it.

I actually pitied him. It seemed a shame that a feller who could argue like that should have to go to the poorhouse; he'd ought to run a summer hotel—when the boarders kicked 'cause there was yeller-eyed beans in the coffee he would be the one to explain that they was lucky to git beans like that without payin' extra for 'em. Thinks I, "I'm an idiot, but I'll make him one more offer."

So I says: "See here, Blueworthy, I could use another man in the stable at the Old Home House. If you want the job you can have it. *Only*, you'll have to work, and work hard."

Well, sir, would you believe it?—his face fell like a cook-book cake. That kind of chance wa'n't what he was lookin' for. He shuffled and hitched around, and fin'ly he says: "I'll—I'll consider your offer," he says.

That was too many for me. "Well, I'll be yardarmed!" says I, and went off and left him "considerin'." I don't know what his considerations amounted to. All I know is that next day they took him to the poorhouse.

And from now on this yarn has got to be more or less hearsay. I'll have to put this and that together, like the woman that made the mince meat. Some of the facts I got from a cousin of Deborah Badger's, some of them I wormed out of Asaph himself one time when he'd had a jug come down from the city and was feelin' toler'ble philanthropic and conversational. But I guess they're straight enough.

Seems that, while I was down notifyin' Blueworthy, Cap'n Poundberry had gone over to the poorhouse to tell the Widow Badger about her new boarder. The widow was glad to hear the news.

"He'll be somebody to talk to, at any rate," says she. "Poor old Betsy Mullen ain't exactly what you'd call company for a sociable body. But I'll mind what you say, Cap'n Benijah. It takes more than a slick tongue to come it over me. I'll make that lazy man work or know the reason why."

So when Asaph arrived—per truck wagon—at three o'clock the next afternoon, Mrs. Badger was ready for him. She didn't wait to shake hands or say: "Glad to see you." No, sir! The minute he landed she sent him out by the barn with orders to chop a couple of cords of oak slabs that was piled there. He groaned and commenced to develop lumbago symptoms, but she cured 'em in a hurry by remarkin' that her doctor's book said vig'rous exercise was the best physic for that kind of disease, and so he must chop hard. She waited till she heard the ax "chunk" once or twice, and then she went into the house, figgerin' that she'd gained the first lap, anyhow.

But in an hour or so it come over her all of a sudden that 'twas awful quiet out by the wood-pile. She hurried to the back door, and there was Ase, settin' on the ground in the shade, his eyes shut and his back against the choppin' block, and one poor lonesome slab in front of him with a couple of splinters knocked off of it. That was his afternoon's work.

Maybe you think the widow wa'n't mad. She tiptoed out to the wood-pile, grabbed her new boarder by the coat

collar and shook him till his head played "Johnny Comes Marchin' Home" against the choppin' block.

"You lazy thing, you!" says she, with her eyes snappin'. "Wake up and tell me what you mean by sleepin' when I told you to work."

"Sleep?" stutters Asaph, kind of reachin' out with his mind for a life-preserver. "I—I wa'n't asleep."

Well, I don't think he had really meant to sleep. I guess he jest set down to think of a good, bran' new excuse for not workin', and kind of drowsed off.

"You wa'n't, hey?" says Deborah. "Then 'twas the best imitation ever I see. What *was* you doin', if 'tain't too personal a question?"

"I—I guess I must have fainted. I'm subject to such spells. You see, ma'am, I ain't been well for——"

"Yes, I know. I understand all about that. Now, you march your boots into that house, where I can keep an eye on you, and help me git supper. To-morrow mornin' you'll git up at five o'clock and chop wood till breakfast time. If I think you've chopped enough, maybe you'll git the breakfast. If I don't think so you'll keep on choppin'. Now, march!"

Bleworthy, he marched, but 'twan't as joyful a parade as an Odd Fellers' picnic. He could see he'd made a mis-cue—a clean miss, and the white ball in the pocket. He knew, too, that a lot depended on his makin' a good impression the first thing, and instead of that he'd gone and "foozled his approach," as that city feller said last summer when he ran the catboat plump into the end of the pier. Deborah, she went out into the kitchen, but she ordered Ase to stay in the dinin' room and set the table; told him to git the dishes out of the closet.

All the time he was doin' it he kept thinkin' about the mistake he'd made, and wonderin' if there wa'n't some way to square up and git solid with the widow. Asaph was a good deal of a philosopher, and his motto was—so he told me afterward, that time I spoke of when he'd been investigating the jug—

his motto was: "Every hard shell has a soft spot somewheres, and after you find it it's easy." If he could only find out somethin' that Deborah Badger was particular interested in, then he believed he could make a ten-strike. And, all at once, down in the corner of the closet, he see a big pile of papers and magazines. The one on top was the *Banner of Light*, and underneath that was the *Mysterious Magazine*.

Then he remembered, all of a sudden, the town talk about Debby's believin' in mediums and spooks and fortune tellers and sech. And he commenced to set up and take notice.

At the supper table he was as mum as a run-down clock; jest set in his chair and looked at Mrs. Badger. She got nervous and fidgety after a spell, and fin'ly bu'sts out with: "What are you starin' at me like that for?"

Ase kind of jumped and looked surprised. "Starin'?" says he. "Was I starin'?"

"I should think you was! Is my hair comin' down, or what is it?"

He didn't answer for a minute, but he looked over her head and then away acrost the room, as if he was watchin' somethin' that moved. "Your husband was a short, kind of fleshy man, as I remember, wa'n't he?" says he, absent-minded like.

"Course he was. But what in the world——"

"'Twa'n't him, then. I thought not."

"Him? My husband? What *do* you mean?"

And then Asaph begun to put on the fine touches. He leaned acrost the table and says he, in a sort of mysterious whisper: "Mrs. Badger," says he, "do you ever see things? Not common things, but strange—shadders like?"

"Mercy me!" says the widow. "No. Do you?"

"Sometimes seems's if I did. Jest now, as I set here lookin' at you, it seemed as if I saw a man come up and put his hand on your shoulder."

Well, you can imagine Debby. She jumped out of her chair and whirled

around like a kitten in a fit. "Good land!" she hollers. "Where? What? Who was it?"

"I don't know who 'twas. His face was covered up; but it kind of come to me—a communication, as you might say—that some day that man was goin' to marry you."

"Land of love! Marry *me*? You're crazy! I'm scart to death."

Ase shook his head, more mysterious than ever. "I don't know," says he. "Maybe I am crazy. But I see that same man this afternoon, when I was in that trance, and—"

"Trance! Do you mean to tell me you was in a *trance* out there by the wood-pile? Are you a *medium*?"

Well, Ase, he wouldn't admit that he was a medium exactly, but he give her to understand that there wa'n't many mediums in this country that could do bus'ness 'longside of him when he was really workin'. Course he made believe he didn't want to talk about sech things, and, likewise of course, that made Debby all the more anxious to talk about 'em. She found out that her new boarder was subject to trances and had second-sight and could draw horoscopes, and I don't know what all. Particular she wanted to know more about that "man" that was goin' to marry her, but Asaph wouldn't say much about him.

"All I can say is," says Ase, "that he didn't appear to me like a common man. He was sort of familiar lookin', and yit there was somethin' distinguished about him, somethin' uncommon, as you might say. But this much comes to me strong: He's a man any woman would be proud to git, and some time he's comin' to offer you a good home. You won't have to keep poorhouse all your days."

So the widow went up to her room with what you might call a case of delightful horrors. She was too scart to sleep and frightened to stay awake. She kept two lamps burnin' all night.

As for Asaph, he waited till 'twas still, and then he crept downstairs to the closet, got an armful of *Banners of Light* and *Mysterious Magazines*,

and went back to his room to study up. Next mornin' there was nothin' said about wood choppin'—Ase was busy makin' preparations to draw Debby's horoscope.

You can see how things went after that. Blueworthy was star boarder at that poorhouse. Mrs. Badger was too much interested in spooks and fortunes to think of askin' him to work, and if she did hint at such a thing, he'd have another "trance" and see that "man," and 'twas all off. And we poor fools of selectmen was congratulatin' ourselves that Ase Blueworthy was doin' somethin' toward earnin' his keep at last. And then—'long in July 'twas—Betsy Mullen died.

One evenin', jest after the Fourth, Deborah and Asaph was in the dinin' room, figgerin' out fortunes with a pack of cards, when there comes a knock at the door. The widow answered it, and there was an old chap, dressed in a blue suit, and a stunnin' pretty girl in what these summer women make believe is a sea-goin' rig. And both of 'em was soppin' wet through, and as miserable as two hens in a rain barrel.

It turned out that the man's name was Lamont, with a colonel's pennant and a million-dollar mark on the fore-top of it, and the girl was his daughter, Mabel. They'd been payin' six dollars a day each for sea air and clam soup over to the Wattagonsett House, in Harniss, and either the soup or the air had affected the colonel's head till he imagined he could sail a boat all by his own'ty-donty. Well, he'd sailed one acrost the bay and got becalmed, and then the tide took him in amongst the shoals at the mouth of Wellmouth Crick, and there, owin' to a mix-up of tide, shoals, dark, and an overdose of foolishness, the boat had upset and foundered and the Lamonts had waded ha'f a mile or so to shore. Once on dry land, they'd headed up the bluff for the only port in sight, which was the poorhouse—although they didn't know it.

The widow and Asaph made 'em as comfortable as they could; rigged 'em up in dry clothes which had belonged

to departed paupers, and got 'em somethin' to eat. The Lamonts was what they called "enchanted" with the whole establishment.

"This," says the colonel, with his mouth full of brown bread, "is delightful, really delightful. The New England hospitality that we read about. So free from ostentation and conventionality."

When you stop to think of it, you'd scarcely expect to run across much ostentation at the poorhouse, but, of course, the colonel didn't know, and he praised everything so like Sam Hill that the widow was ashamed to break the news to him. And Ase kept quiet, too, you can be sure of that. As for Mabel, she was one of them gushy, goo-gooey kind of girls, and she was as struck with the shebang as her dad. She said the house itself was a "perfect dear."

And after supper they paired off and got to talkin', the colonel with Mrs. Badger, and Asaph with Mabel. Now, I can jest imagine how Ase talked to that poor, unsuspectin' young female. He sartin did love an audience, and here was one that didn't know him nor his hist'ry nor nothin'. He played the sad and mysterious. You could see that he was a blighted bud, all right. He was a man with a hidden sorrier, and the way he'd sigh and change the subject when it come to embarrassin' questions was enough to bring tears to a graven image, let alone a romantic girl jest out of boardin' school.

Then, after a spell of this, Mabel wanted to be shown the house, so as to see the "sweet, old-fashioned rooms." And she wanted papa to see 'em, too, so Ase led the way, like the talkin' man in the dime museum. And the way them Lamonts agonized over every rag mat and corded bedstead was something past belief. When they was jest sayin' good-night—they *had* to stay all night because their own clothes wa'n't dry and those they had on were more picturesque than stylish—Mabel turns to her father and says she:

"Papa dear," she says, "I believe that at last we've found the very thing we've been lookin' for."

And the colonel said yes, he guessed they had.

Next mornin' they was up early and out enjoyin' the view; it is about the best view alongshore, and they had a fit over it. When breakfast was done the Lamonts takes Asaph one side and the colonel says:

"Mr. Blueworthy," he says, "my daughter and I are very much pleased with the cape and the cape people. Some time ago we made up our minds that if we could find the right spot we would build a summer home here. Preferably we wish to purchase a typical, old-time, Colonial homestead and remodel it, retainin', of course, all the original old-fashioned flavor. Cost is not so much the consideration as location and the house itself. We are—ahem!—well, frankly, your place here suits us exactly."

"We adore it," says Mabel, emphatic.

"Mr. Blueworthy," goes on the colonel, "will you sell us your home? I am prepared to pay a lib'ral price."

Poor Asaph was kind of thrown on his beam ends, so's to speak. He hemmed and hawed, and fin'ly had to blurt out that he didn't own the place. The Lamonts was astonished. The colonel wanted to know if it belonged to Mrs. Badger.

"Why, no," says Ase. "The fact is—that is to say—you see—"

And jest then the widow opened the kitchen window and called to 'em.

"Colonel Lamont," says she, "there's a sailboat beatin' up the harbor, and I think the folks on it are lookin' for you."

The colonel excused himself, and run off down the hill toward the back side of the point, and Asaph was left alone with the girl. He see, I s'pose, that here was his chance to make the best yarn out of what was bound to come out anyhow in a few minutes. So he fetched a sigh that sounded as if 'twas rackin' loose the foundations and commenced.

He asked Mabel if she was prepared to hear somethin' that would shock her turrible, somethin' that would under-

mine her confidence in human natur'. She was a good deal upset, and no wonder, but she braced up and let on that she guessed she could stand it. So then he told her that her dad and her had been deceived, that that house wa'n't his nor Mrs. Badger's; 'twas the Wellmouth poor farm, and he was a pauper.

She was shocked, all right enough, but afore she had a chance to ask a question he begun to tell her the story of his life. 'Twas a fine chance for him to spread himself, and I cal'late he done it to the skipper's taste. He told her how him and his sister had lived in their little home, their own little nest, over there by the shore, for years and years. He led her out to where she could jest see the roof of his old shanty over the sand hills, and he wiped his eyes and raved over it. You'd think that tumble-down shack was a hunk out of paradise; Adam and Eve's place in the Garden was a short lobster 'long-side of it. Then, he said, he was took down with an incurable disease. He tried and tried to git along, but 'twas no go. He mortgaged the shanty to a graspin' money lender—meanin' Poundberry—and that money was spent. Then his sister passed away and his heart broke; so they took him to the poorhouse.

"Miss Lamont," says he, "good-by. Sometimes in the midst of your fashionable career, in your gayety and so forth, pause," he says, "and give a thought to the broken-hearted pauper who has told you his life tragedy."

Well, now, you take a green girl, right fresh from novels and music lessons, and spring that on her—what can you expect? Mabel she cried and took on dreadful.

"Oh, Mr. Blueworthy!" says she, grabbin' his hand. "I'm so glad you told me. I'm so glad! Cheer up," she says. "I respect you more than ever, and my father and I will——"

Jest then the colonel comes puffin' up the hill. He looked as if he'd heard news.

"My child," he says, in a kind of horrified whisper, "can you realize that

we have actually passed the night in the—in the *almshouse*?"

Mabel held up her hand. "Hush, papa," she says. "Hush. I know all about it. Come away, quick; I've got somethin' very important to say to you."

And she took her dad's arm and went off down the hill, moppin' her pretty eyes with her handkerchief and smilin' back, every once in a while, through her tears, at Asaph.

Now, it happened that there was a selectmen's meetin' that afternoon at four o'clock. I was on hand, and so was Zoeth Tiddit and most of the others. Cap'n Poundberry and Darius Gott were late. Zoeth was as happy as a clam at high water; he'd sold the poorhouse property that very day to a Colonel Lamont, from Harniss, who wanted it for a summer place.

"And I got the price we set on it, too," says Zoeth. "But that wa'n't the funniest part of it. Seems's old man Lamont and his daughter was very much upset because Debby Badger and Ase Blueworthy would be turned out of house and home 'count of the place bein' sold. The colonel was hot foot for givin' 'em a check for five hundred dollars to square things; said his daughter'd made him promise he would. Says I: 'You can give it to Debby, if you want to, but don't you lay a copper on that Blueworthy fraud.' Then I told him the truth about Ase. He couldn't hardly believe it, but I fin'ly convinced him, and he made out the check to Debby. I took it down to her myself jest after dinner. Ase was there, and his eyes pretty nigh popped out of his head.

"'Look here,' I says to him; 'if you'd been worth a continental you might have had some of this. As it is, you'll be farmed out somewheres—that's what'll happen to you.'"

And jest as Zoeth was tellin' this in comes Cap'n Benijah. He was happy, too.

"I cal'late the Lamonts must be buyin' all the property alongshore," he says when he heard the news. "I sold that

old shack that I took from Blueworthy to that Lamont girl to-day for three hundred and fifty dollars. She wouldn't say what she wanted of it, neither, and I didn't care much; I was glad to git rid of it."

"I can tell you what she wanted of it," says somebody behind us. We turned round and 'twas Gott; he'd jest come in. "I jest met Squire Foster," he says, "and the squire tells me that that Lamont girl come into his office with the bill of sale for the property you sold her and made him deed it right over to Ase Blueworthy, as a present from her."

"What?" says all hands, Poundberry loudest of all.

"That's right," said Darius. "She told the squire a long rigamarole about what a martyr Ase was, and how her dad was goin' to do somethin' for him, but that she was goin' to give him his home back again with her own money, money her father had given her to buy a ring with, she said, though that ain't reasonable, of course—nobody'd pay that much for a ring. The squire tried to tell her what a no-good Ase was, but she froze him quicker'n— Where you goin', Cap'n Benije?"

"I'm goin' down to that poorhouse," hollers Poundberry. "I'll find out the rights and wrongs of this thing mighty quick."

We all said we'd go with him, and we went, six in one carryall. As we hove in sight of the poorhouse a buggy drove away from it, goin' in t'other direction.

"That looks like the Baptist minister's buggy," says Darius. "What on earth's he been down here for?"

Nobody could guess. Jest as we run alongside the poorhouse door Ase Blue-

worthy stepped out, leadin' Debby Badger. She was as red as an auction flag.

"By time, Ase Blueworthy!" hollers Cap'n Benijah, startin' to git out of the carryall, "what do you mean by— Debby, what are you holdin' that rascal's hand for?"

But Ase cut him short. "Cap'n Poundberry," says he, dignified as a boy with a stiff neck, "I might pass over your remarks to me, but when you address my wife—"

"Your wife?" hollers everybody— everybody but the cap'n; he only sort of gurgled.

"My wife," says Asaph. "When you men—church members, too, some of you—sold the house over her head, I'm proud to say that I, havin' a home once more, was able to step for'ard and ask her to share it with me. We was married a few minutes ago," he says.

"And, oh, Cap'n Poundberry!" cried Debby, lookin' as if this was the most wonderful part of it—"oh, Cap'n Poundberry!" she says, "we've known for a long time that some man—an uncommon kind of man—was comin' to offer me a house some day, but even Asaph didn't know 'twas himself; did you, Asaph?"

We selectmen talked the thing over goin' home, but Cap'n Benije didn't speak till we was jest turnin' in at his gate. Then he fetched his knee a thump with his fist, and says he, in the most disgusted tone ever I heard:

"A house and lot for nothin'," he says, "a wife to do the work for him, and five hundred dollars to spend! Sometimes the way this world's run gives me moral indigestion."

Which was toler'ble radical for a Come-Outer to say, seems to me.




A CLEVER MAN

"YOU must be mine, you must be mine"—

He used the words best known to wooers, In ardent tones—but all the same

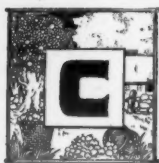
He never said: "I must be yours."

MADELINE BRIDGES.



THE SPHINX'S RIDDLE

BY
CAROLYN WELLS



ONSTERNATION was rife in the palace of King Ali Bazan.

And the ripeness of the consternation was increased rather than diminished by the fact that nobody, outside the Royal Council, knew what it was all about.

Messengers were hasted, as on wings, with hurry calls for the chief astrologers, soothsayers, augurs, seers, sages and speculators.

And right instantly all of these wise men responded to the summons. This proved their wisdom, for if they hadn't done so they would have lost their heads permanently.

Now, the kingdom of Ali Bazan existed so far away and so long ago, that no topographical or chronological details are necessary. It was Oriental and ornamental, and those two elements make for beauty and happiness, which are, after all, the only necessities of life.

It must be confessed at the outset that King Ali Bazan was a Terror. He was despotic, arbitrary, tyrannical, and his subjects quivered and shook with fear at his glance, until another glance scared them stiff.

Although fierce and cruel, his was a luxurious, splendor-loving nature, and he lived as befitted a king. Indeed, so liberal were his appointments and so great his appetite that his life would easily have befitted two kings.

It goes without saying that a make-up of this sort would be absolutely devoid of fear. And it was so, for—with one exception—this king feared nothing and went blithely kinging along his primrose path.

But with ever the one exception. 'Twas not a rival potentate; King Ali

Bazan instantly chopped off any hostile head that appeared above his tropical horizon. 'Twas not his wife; Queen Amina Mona Mi was a most docile and adoring spouse.

Nor, though this may not be believed, was the king afraid of his mother-in-law; for the Dowager Fat Ima was as completely under the royal thumb as the humblest page or lackey.

Be it known, then, that the only person who could cause the royal cheek to blanch and the royal teeth to chatter was none other than a Sphinx.

Tradition had it that this Sphinx paid visits to the kingdom at long intervals. She had never been there during the present reign, and King Ali Bazan didn't really believe she would come. For her last visit had been many hundreds of years before, and he thought that likely as not she had given up the habit.

But he had always a haunting sort of fear that she might come, and he felt a depressing conviction that her visit would prove disastrous.

For the conditions were these: When the Sphinx came she would ask a riddle, and if the king could not answer it he would be both decapitated and dethroned. There was small comfort in the fact that he probably wouldn't mind the second punishment as much as the first.

And the truth was, the king was just no good at all at guessing riddles. He couldn't for the life of him remember when a door wasn't a door, or why a hen went across the road. And so, as a matter of precaution, he had gathered together a great body of wise men, in order that they might assist him if ever the dreaded visit should take place.

And at last the doom had fallen. The cause of the present confusion in the palace was nothing more nor less than

the tidings just received that the Sphinx was coming.

When the soothsayers and sages reached the royal audience chamber and heard the news, they were so overcome with fright, fear, terror, horror, awe and dire dismay that they shook in their embroidered Oriental slippers. And as these same slippers were nothing but slippery, shuffly toe holds, of course they shook off, and Shu-shu, the royal slipper bearer, had great to-do to keep putting them on the proper feet again.

Of course it was not known what riddle the Sphinx would ask, but as history recorded only one that she had ever propounded, it was deemed wise to teach the answer to that one very thoroughly to the frightened king.

As some of the present generation may not know, the question in question was this: "What goes upon four legs in the morning, two legs in the afternoon and three legs in the evening?" The answer to this riddle was Man; the explanation being that he creeps in the morning of his life, walks in the afternoon and needs a stick in his old age.

The explanation could not be banged into the king's head, although the wise men, severally and jointly, tried their best. But they thought they might at least teach him the answer, and they kept at it until he had thoroughly mastered the task, and was prepared to answer "Man" to any conundrum the Sphinx might ask.

As a possible propitiation to his visitor, the king had ordered a festive celebration; for the Sphinx was accustomed to being lionized, and it might please her.

The illustrious guest arrived in a wheeled cage, as befitted the lion part of her. The cage was even more ornately carved and gilded than those seen in circus parades, and the beautiful face of the Sphinx looked complacently from between the bars. She wore a magnificent jewel-studded turban, a feather boa, numerous neck chains and a pearl collar. Over her exquisite shoulders were straps of black velvet, but this was as far as she could utilize woman's attire. When the king first

caught sight of her, he couldn't help thinking that she looked dressed to kill; and somehow the thought bothered him a lot.

The king, accompanied by the dowager, the queen and the young Princess Pikabu, with all his retinue of courtiers and slaves, was at the portal of the palace to greet the Sphinx. The king himself threw open the door of the cage and invited his guest to alight. Whereupon she alit, and, holding her lovely head haughtily aloft, the winged lion part of her padded softly and gracefully up the steps to the palace.

The program of entertainment for her reception was made lengthy, for the king wished to put off as long as possible the time when she should ask the dreaded question. But every hour seemed a moment, and all too soon the Sphinx announced that she would now give her riddle.

Silently saying, "Man, man," to himself, the king listened while she spoke.

Though her voice was like music, and her smile of the sweetest, a chill struck the heart of her listeners, for they realized it was not the same old riddle, but a new one.

"What canst thou feed to thy camel, slay with thy scimitar and bestow upon myself as a gift?"

The king tried to say, "Man," but the word stuck in his throat; and it was just as well, for everybody present except the frightened king knew that "Man" was not the right answer.

Moved to leniency by the king's pitiable condition, the Sphinx kindly granted him an hour in which to guess the riddle, saying she would herself take a nap in the meantime; and, crossing her huge, velvety forepaws, she laid her head down on them and went to sleep.

This respite was a marvelous concession, for tradition had it that the answer must be given instantaneously.

But it was with a scant hope that the wiseacres began to cudgel their brains for the desired answer, and the king himself was a picture of despair.

Then the Princess Pikabu spoke up, timidly. She was a lovely girl, of the

reluctant feet variety, and though her reading was supposed to be restricted to the *Young Lady's Garland*, she had of late been surreptitiously devouring detective stories.

"O Perfectly Enlightened," she said, bowing to the assembled wise men, "though none of us hath the wit to guess the Sphinx's riddle, yet well do I wot me of one who hath even the power to detect it."

Old Has Ben, one of the most ancient of the seers, looked at the princess kindly. "My daughter," he said, "tell what thou knowest, and that quickly, that thy father may not be quite such a long time dead."

"I know not the man myself," quoth the princess, "but this I know: His name is Shere Lok, and he liveth in the street called Bakur."

Even before the soft final *r* had rolled from the princess' lips, swift messengers had flown in search of the man she told of.

Down the street called Bakur they hied, and shouting, "In the name of King Ali Bazan!" they burst uncereemoniously into the home of Shere Lok. They found him garbed in an Oriental dressing gown, smoking a nargileh.

"O Shere Lok," they cried, "we have heard of thy powers of divination and detection. We have heard that thou art a Detektiv, which is to say, thou art semi-supernatural and half-witted. Now, we beg of thee, unravel a riddle for the king, and all good fortune shall be thine."

Shere Lok was a grave, stern man. With the bored look peculiar to his calling, he said, briefly: "Who propounded the riddle?"

"The Sphinx, O Most Wise and Honorable."

"The Sphinx!" and Shere Lok frowned slightly. "A lady with a Past. 'Tis doubtless unanswerable. Hast the riddle with thee?"

"Ay, O Most Radiantly Astute," and one of the messengers produced from the folds of his belt a parchment on which was inscribed the riddle of the Sphinx.

Shere Lok read the riddle, and with

a sniff of scornful contempt threw the parchment from him.

"'Tis too easy!" he cried. "A babe could guess it."

Far from being offended at this attitude, the king's messengers were delighted, and cried, eagerly: "Then, O Shere Lok, tell thou us the answer, that we may hasten back to the palace and save the king's life."

With the same air of contemptuous patronage, Shere Lok scribbled some words on a bit of paper. This paper he put in an envelope, carefully sealed it and addressed it to the king.

"Begone!" he cried, tossing the document to the chief messenger. "Take that to King Ali Bazan, and bid him keep both his head and his throne."

Rapidly as the messengers had run to Bakur Street, eke more rapidly ran they back to the palace. And none too soon, for the Sphinx was already stirring, and the king was already well-nigh dead with hopeless despair.

Then the messenger handed him the sealed paper, and his trembling fingers broke the seal. As he read a smile broke over his royal countenance. "But I can't understand," he murmured.

The Princess Pikabu flew to her father's side and looked over the kingly shoulder. "Why, yes, of course," she exclaimed; "nobody said it must be only——"

At this moment the Sphinx became broad awake, and, glaring severely at the king, she said: "Hast thy answer ready?"

"Ay, I have," said the king, with an air as confident as the Sphinx's own.

"Then tell me," the Sphinx went on, "what canst thou feed to thy camel, slay with thy scimitar and bestow upon myself as a gift?"

And the king replied: "Grass, an enemy and a jeweled tiara."

At the first part of his reply the Sphinx looked incredulous, at the second part she looked angry, but at the third part she beamed with delight.

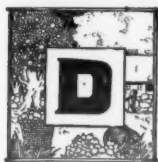
Eagerly she exclaimed: "Keep thou thine head and thy throne, but where is the tiara?"



SOCIETY, HERE AND IN ENGLAND



BY LADY BROOME



DECIDEDLY there are marked differences existing between the fashionable society of England and America; or, perhaps, I should say, in order to speak quite specifically, between the politest society as it is represented to-day in London and New York. Nevertheless, I refuse to be called inconsistent when I insist that at the same time the strongest sort of family resemblance can be traced in what I consider the two most brilliant social centers in the world.

This resemblance is due to the fact that the fundamental ideals of social American life are not German, French, Austrian, Italian or Russian, but are exactly the same as those we follow in England.

America naturally has adapted these ideals quite to suit her own needs, to conformity with the demands of her climate, her people and their independent tastes; but the result is that while London and New York are peculiarly dissimilar in some of their social aspects, they are, in other respects, strikingly alike.

Furthermore, I may add that this resemblance to which I refer is becoming more noticeable as time goes on, as the Americans grow richer and more luxury-loving, and as international marriages increase in number.

Twelve years ago I made my first trip to the States, and there I found the ways and the workings of transatlantic society far less like our own than when I crossed the ocean last year and visited in hospitable homes as far east as Long Island and as far west as Detroit.

Then, however, as well as now, I ful-

ly realized that the most marked contrast between our two nearly related societies is due first and foremost to the American woman, and especially the young American woman. She is the most unique social figure to be found in the great republic. She is dazzling, versatile and—delightful. Nothing at all like her have we to show in London, or, for that matter, in all our empire, and, to the mind of the stranger and the observer in New York, she succeeds in gracefully proving the fact that of all modern societies, that of America is the most richly dressed.

Clothes, with the American woman, are one of the most prominent features of her striking and attractive personality—I think she dresses extravagantly only so far as the mere outlay of money goes, for, with rare exceptions, she dresses in absolutely good taste, though her one defect in this respect, in English eyes, is that she insists upon being fashionable to the point of verging on severe conventionality.

Nevertheless, no other women, I am sure, except those, perhaps, who move about the European courts, understand so well as the Americans do the art of wearing beautiful garments to the very greatest advantage.

However, the consequence of the very high dress standard established in America is that these fine feathers count more as one of the means to the end of gaining social prestige than they count anywhere else. In New York and her big sister cities I could not help remarking that the richness and the variety of a woman's toilet told marvelously to her advantage and seemed absolutely necessary to her reputation and position in any circle.

An American woman who does not

dress well—that is to say, handsomely and strictly according to the fashion of the latest date—finds it harder in her own country to pass, socially, as a smart or influential individual than the traditional camel finds it to make his way through the needle's eye; and she who adopts a plain or a quaint or a picturesque type of toilet is looked at rather severely and askance.

This question of clothes is not, so far, in London society a matter of such paramount importance as I found it, for instance, in New York. English women, curiously enough, are in this respect much more independent than their American sisters. As a rule, they dress more as they like and less conscientiously according to the *dernier cri* from Paris, than is now almost the law in the States.

The average English society woman thinks less than the American about her gowns. She very often prefers picturesque and original clothes to those cut and made by the best artiste in the Rue de la Paix, and she expects to be more seriously considered for what she is than what she wears.

Nearly always in America I could distinguish the most prominent and powerful social figure in a crowd by noting the perfection of her costume, the magnificence of her jewels, and the extremely fashionable and even dashing appearance she presented from the tip of her little shoe to the topmost plume in her hat; just as you can single out the field marshal at a dazzling full-dress, military gathering by his sumptuous uniform and the glitter of his many orders, to say nothing of his boots!

Now, in England it is not always easy to detect the finest birds among the women at a social function by looking for superior smartness of fine feathers, and, therefore, at the average fashionable affair in London the effect presented, as far as feminine toilets are concerned, is not nearly so splendid as one constantly notes at almost any elaborate entertainment given in America.

But a great deal of the splendor of fine gowns and gorgeous jewels to be

seen at the opera, balls, dinners, etc., in New York, is not due to the American woman's overestimate of the value of clothes. The wives and daughters of even the fairly prosperous transatlantic husband and father dress often as well as the women relatives of our very hugely rich man, and this is the consequence of a generosity in money matters in which I think the American man stands alone. He likes to see his wife well dressed, he knows when she is beautifully gowned, and he thinks it no extravagance at all for her to have the richest and most various confectations that the shops can supply; while concerning his own dress he takes little or no thought at all.

With the Englishman, however, this is not the case. On his own clothes he spends often three times as much as his American cousin would think necessary. He takes a profound pride and interest in the upkeep of his wardrobe and in following his conservative fashions, and the result is that his wife and his daughters have sometimes less than half the sum that an American woman receives to spend on her toilets.

But so much of the infectious gayety and self-confidence so noticeable in the manner of the American woman is not the consequence only of wearing exquisite clothes and feeling the comfort of an overflowing purse; it is the result of her possession of the four fine qualities that are always bound to render a woman successful socially, and it is her quick wit, her high spirits, her excellent sense of humor and her unflinching capacity for conversation, quite as much as her sweet frocks and her pretty face, that has given her so just a fame abroad and at home.

If she has social ambitions she asks nobody to help her to attain them. She conquers the world of the ball and drawing rooms unaided, and this is all the more remarkable because she is not, as a rule, educated as our wealthy and titled English girls are, to know that she is some day to be called upon to fill a prominent social position.

The young American woman finds her position for herself and has no hesi-

tancy or difficulty in claiming or keeping it, and that in her which I most intensely admire is her perfect self-reliance, her courage and her modesty. At eighteen she has often the social pose and perspicacity of a worldly woman of forty, without either hardness or cynicism, and at twenty-two she is a thoroughly interesting and sympathetic companion.

Her personality has given to American society its leading characteristic, which is a cheerful youthfulness, which proves positively exhilarating to those who are accustomed to the social atmosphere of European cities. In nearly every mental feature that I have pointed out above, this particular product of the States seems almost unrelated, even in the remotest degree, to our English women, who are slow to develop, shy and timid.

In London drawing rooms, in spite of all we have heard of the revolt of the daughters and the spread of general feminine emancipation, the debutantes don't count as they do in America, as a powerful social body. An American girl gets enough experience, apparently, in the two weeks that follow her debut to know her way about in society without faltering. It generally takes an English girl two seasons to get so far, but in justice to the truth as I see it, and to my countrywomen as I know them, I must say that they grow in charm with maturity, and that the English woman at thirty-five begins to possess an attractiveness that in her American cousin is apt to be lacking at that age.

At thirty-five the American woman appears to be tired of society. She finds it monotonous or shallow, and she grows, if she has not married, into a sense of the intense seriousness of life. At this point she will, as likely as not, resign her drawing-room career for the purpose of seeking a mission. If she marries, she finds her home and her children enough to satisfy all her demands, and in the wife and mother, the belle and the beauty are lost.

But this is not the case with the English woman, whose most decided charm

so often develops in the years when she is a matron, and when her ambition is to become a powerful hostess and an influence in society. At thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, and even often seventy, she possesses a hearty zest for the duties and diversions of the gay world; she sees new prizes to win, and she does not relax her interest in people and in things. She is often just as important a personage at sixty-five as she was at twenty-five, and marvelously vigorous and youthful in both mind and body.

Physically, under the social strain, the average English woman wears, I think, better than does the American. At fifty she will frequently preserve the rich, natural color of her hair, show a smooth, rosy skin that can bravely bear the searching eye of the sunlight, and she can weather the exhausting demands of a London season without losing a whit of her bright color, her high spirits or her taste for the social game. The Queen, Lady Warwick, Georgiana, Lady Dudley, Lady Londonderry and Lady de Grey, for example, are among those numerous and notable leaders who, only according to the inexorable truthfulness of the calendar, have passed well beyond the very shady side of forty, and who neither by word nor look appear to have traveled further than the early thirties.

London society is therefore well supplied with a large and indispensable element that I could not find existing in New York; nor does American society possess, in common with London, any group of dowagers, of distinctly old ladies, whose fine appearance, lively wit, wisdom and varied experiences add so wonderfully to the charm of our drawing-room life.

Though well launched in her seventies, the Duchess of Devonshire still capably holds her position as leader of London's very smart titled set; Lady Dorothy Neville and Lady Roden, who have long passed their grand climacteric, conscientiously keep pace with extensive social duties, and the octogenarian Baroness Burdett-Coutts entertains at some of the most splendid functions that London sees each season.

These are but a few among our stately belles of seventy-five and eighty who are as glad to receive callers on their days at home as are American girls of eighteen, and any one of whom will write her reminiscences or discuss Mr. Chamberlain's fiscal policy with as natural and charming a vivacity as though time had passed her by.

The interesting presence and influence of these women are something that is missed when we cross the water, for the elderly American woman takes little or no part in gay doings. Her absence from the *beau monde* is quite as conspicuous to an *habitué* of London drawing rooms as is that of the elderly gentlemen—and here, with the mention of the masculine element, I am reminded of one of the most impressive contrasts between our society and that of any large American city in which I have ever had the good fortune to find myself.

In England, and in London especially, the men and women take about an equal share in what I might call the duties of social routine. We possess a very large leisure class, and our men of title, our gentry and the sons of many of our newly made millionaires go, with few exceptions, more or less steadily the round of the fashionable career. They are free to drive, call, dance, dine, visit in the country, sojourn on the Riviera, and are quite as much *en evidence* and as responsible for the maintenance of a good, gay, gracious and interesting social atmosphere as are the women.

Therefore, to the English woman who is gaining her first experience of American society, the masculine presence and tone seem prominently and lamentably lacking. Even in New York, where prodigious wealth predominates, the men prefer the pursuit of riches to the pursuit of social recreation, and to the former thrilling occupation even the leaders among the millionaires devote almost exclusively their time and their energies.

When he has done each day with his office, the average American man seeks, for relaxation from mental strain, his motor car, his yacht, his golf clubs or

his horses. He has neither the time nor the taste for society, as he tells his wife and daughters, on whom, therefore, all the social responsibilities hang, and this is more than a pity, because when he chooses to exert himself he is an interesting and agreeable companion.

The course that he follows is, from a social standpoint, a cause for the deepest regret, and this is one reason why I believe that the socially ambitious young American woman is so often tempted to venture a matrimonial alliance with an Englishman or with a foreigner. She longs to exert her brilliant gifts in circles where the gay, gregarious and amusing members of both sexes are found, and where her particular talents and accomplishments will enable her to shine in more than one gay circle.

New York has, so far as I could discover, but one powerful exclusive and exacting society organization. That is its well-known smart set, formed by the famous four hundred. To Washington it is necessary to go to feel the interest of political affairs, and in Boston it is requisite to settle if you wish to belong in the leading literary coterie, but one of the charms of London's bigness, and its proud position as the city home of the country's ruler, as the capital and the center of English artistic as well as English business life, is its variety of social interests.

In London one may be a very commanding and influential social figure and yet not belong to the smart set, or the literary set, or the musical set. Women such as Miss Balfour, Mrs. Joseph Chamberlain, Lady Lansdowne, etc., are potent personalities in the social political world to which they and their masculine relatives belong, and which is quite separate in most of its gatherings, its ambitions and its leaders from the other circles that exist in London.

Our English society, then, is on the whole far more diversified in its interests than that which one finds in America, and, curiously enough, the fashionable English woman boasts some up-to-date privileges that are scarcely known

at all to her cousins on the other side of the water. It is her club life and her club rights to which I am here referring, the like of which I neither saw nor heard anything in the United States.

Let me hasten to admit that I both saw and heard much of the American women's clubs, and found them valuable and interesting associations, but in nearly every respect they were wholly unrelated, in both form and feature, to the Albermarle or the Empire, the Alexandra or the Sesame, the Ladies' Army and Navy or the new Century of London. In London the average woman's club is entered and used exactly as is a man's club, for convenience, comfort and sociable ends, and whether in this new departure and modern development we are to be congratulated or not I shall not undertake to discuss or settle here.

Suffice it to say that we have the new club for the new woman, and that it has developed into a very striking influence in London society life. So great has become of late the demand for club accommodations for ladies, that enterprising firms have found it a paying investment to build palatial residences for these feminine organizations, and then to conduct the management on the best business basis.

By this means the women are able to enjoy the maximum of comfort at a minimum outlay of trouble, and scarcely a member of our society but now finds it essential to belong, as the men do, to more than one club. A fashionable individual, for example, hardly thinks it an extravagance to find membership in no less than three. She needs, she usually concludes, the use of a gay and yet exclusive club, where she can meet at any time the feminine members of her own set; a sedate and literary club, where she can mix more or less with the women of the artistic and serious circles, and entertain some of the literary lions of the hour, and then she often casts in her lot and her large fees and dues for a good bridge club, like the new Almocks, that is devoted wholly to the rigors of that game.

At her club the London woman is

privileged to smoke, to entertain at breakfast, dinner, lunch and tea her friends of both sexes more informally and economically than at home, and, in consequence, this modern privilege and convenience has become almost indispensable, and by even the most conservative it is accepted and enjoyed.

But this does not mean, of course, that with the development of club life among the women that London and English society is relinquishing its hold in the smallest degree upon its ancient traditions and formalities. Our society is still far more governed by traditions and fixed ceremonies than any that I know in America; in many respects, to the eye at least, it is far more brilliant.

Very much of this is due to our possession of a king and queen and their court, and never have our sovereigns taken a more active social part than they play now. During the reign of the late sovereign this could hardly be said, for Queen Victoria had a cordial distaste for social doings, and she would have gladly lived with as much simplicity, privacy and independence as does President Roosevelt. The queen did not, furthermore, love our great city, and when she could she delegated her duties as hostess and head of the fashionable world to her children.

Happily now, for London and English society, King Edward and Queen Alexandra play active rôles socially, because they are sincerely fond of gayety, of diversion and good company. Since the accession of the king our social activities have been greatly stimulated, and it would be idle to say that the influence of the sovereign has not been already enormously felt.

At the head of all fashionable society, the king and queen have decidedly taken their stand, and their arrival in London in the spring, and their court's officially open the season. When the court retires to the country London's seasons are at an end, and thus, because we claim a leader, and because our climate so arranges the matter for us that the time for gay doings coincides with the spring, we naturally possess a longer and, I think I may say, a more bril-

liant and crowded social season than New York, for example, can boast.

Even the very gayest of the gay in an American city, while the social tide is at its flood, never know the excessive rush of diverse and amusing affairs that make up a springtime in London. The overwhelming extent of the festive functions on foot can perhaps be appreciated when I tell of the confession of the American bride of an English peer who was undergoing her first experiences in the modern Babylon.

In her own country the beautiful young girl had had successive seasons in New York, Washington and Chicago, but all her American records for continuous going were easily broken, she admitted, during the first fortnight of a London May. It was impossible, she found, to accept more than one-fourth of the invitations that poured in upon her, and yet she would continue somehow to show her pretty face and gown in as many as four or five drawing rooms in an evening.

I have seen Lady Curzon and her husband arrive at the top of a long flight of crowded stairs, press a hostess' hand and then turn and go back to their carriage. It was not that he and she did not wish to stay longer, nor that the rooms were too full to give space to one more guest, but that they actually had not time to linger. The press of their engagements was literally too great to admit of more than a glance at many functions.

The hard American winter does not allow, as our springtime permits with us, the offering of an enormous variety of tempting amusements. In London in April, May, June and far in July, four of the long months out of the twelve, we can benefit, with the exception of sleighing and outdoor skating, by all the forms of entertainment that luxurious New York affords during its brief winter, with the addition of a number of *al fresco* amusements that in freezing weather cannot be attempted.

Throughout a winter in an American city, dinners, balls, luncheons and the opera and theater, with the break made in New York by the Horse Show, form

almost the fixed routine for all social undertakings. In London, in the season, we claim all these means of entertainment along with the opening of the great picture galleries, the races, the outdoor games at Ranelagh, Hurlingham and Lords, the parliamentary teas, the great boating contest on the Thames, water parties, garden parties, and, over and above all this, the continual movement and glitter and change of the great court functions that are, of course, impossible in a republican country.

Because, then, of the fixing of our season at a more propitious time of the year, and because of the glamour that the presence of gracious, gay and dignified royalty sheds wherever it moves, I am very much inclined to doubt if ever in America there can exist a society quite so kaleidoscopic in its movement and life and varied form and interests as ours.

Even in the seemingly unimportant detail of the dress and duties and presence of our servants, we possess a certain striking and picturesque element that makes for the splendor of social ceremonies, and which, somehow, I found distinctly wanting in the realms of high life across the water.

In New York, I must confess that I could not help noticing that the rule seems to be in favor of employing no more servants than are actually requisite for comfort and convenience. Where it is possible to do so, a mechanical contrivance is substituted for a domestic, and the preference of the housekeeper and hostess is for arraying their house and stable servants in the least obtrusive of liveries.

The American ideal appears to be—I cannot but say that in some respects it is a high one—that the servants' attentions and presence and assistance should be felt rather than seen or heard, while in England we follow almost the opposite theory and practice. For a London house so large as that of Mrs. Cornelius Vanderbilt, Sr., Mrs. Astor or Mrs. Stuyvesant Fish, or Mr. Elbridge Gerry, the number of domestics considered necessary, not alone to main-

tain the perfection of its condition, but to keep up the dignity of its owners' position, would be nearly, if not exactly, double the number now actually employed in any of the above-mentioned American palaces.

Not all of them would be necessary, perhaps; many perhaps, in the eyes of an American housekeeper, would seem annoyingly superfluous, but in London society stately, splendidly liveried footmen, etc., are considered as essential to the brilliance and ceremony of fashionable living as the somewhat useless but gorgeous and highly ornamental chairs, tables, vases, etc., that adorn a state drawing room. We may be said to employ servants as much for their decorative value as for purposes of utility, and that is one of the reasons why, when the London season is in full swing, the ladies of high degree are enabled to give entertainments which for dazzlingly splendid effect quite outshine the finest private functions that I have ever seen in America.

Naturally, this relic of the fine feudal days, when lords and gentlemen, duchesses and ladies, were followed by their retinues, adds tremendously to the expense of living and maintaining a fashionable establishment. The upkeep of the liveries alone, for the half dozen or more lofty, straight-limbed footmen who line the staircase at Devonshire House or the Marquis of Bute's town mansion, when a great entertainment is given, amounts to a sum that would make even an American millionaire look dubious.

And here, by the way, is an excellent opportunity open to me to express my long cherished conviction, founded upon facts, gained by investigation and observation, that the cost of entertaining fashionably and well in one's own home in either London or New York is almost, if not exactly, the same in the two great cities; and again I shall take advantage of these American pages open to me here and now to answer a question, so frequently asked, as to which of the two great centers of Anglo-Saxon society may be considered the more exclusive.

In England and in London, where, as I have said before, so many different social wheels fit with a wheels, there still exist some very close and carefully preserved circles. These are, for the most part, composed of the members of very old and very proud English nobility and gentry, and this coterie of families is as haughtily reserved and as exclusive as the carefully hedged about aristocracy of Austria or old France.

Regarded, however, as a whole, I do not think I can truthfully say that London society is quite so difficult to enter or so chary of new blood and newcomers as is the accredited and empowered and established smart set which rules and regulates in, let us say, New York.

In the first place, London society is much too big and made up of too many different elements in order painstakingly to examine into and consider the antecedents and qualifications of every man and woman who knocks for admission to its agreeable circle. It welcomes, with hearty greeting, all amusing, cheerful, interesting individuals, who conduct themselves decorously, and a great part of its pleasantness lies in the fact that it includes artists, authors, actors, statesmen, dusky skinned Oriental princes, as well as the fairest and gayest of American beauties, in its drawing-room gatherings.

Nothing, I think, is more distinctive of what we might call the open door of good, fashionable London society, as contrasted with that of America, than the excellent welcome and standing which the well-bred and well-born Jews find not only in the salons of private individuals, but at court as well.

No descendants of the fellow voyagers of the Conqueror hold better social positions than do the Rothschild family, for example, the Sassoons or the Bischoffsheims. I do not think we can just find their equals among the social figures in any American cities, and Lady Jessel and others of the very purest Hebrew blood carry their titles by inheritance from distinguished and honored ancestors or by marriage into high Christian and English families. How much the Jewish element in Lon-

don society makes for charm and variety is easily demonstrated by the superb entertainments which the heads of the Rothschild and Bischoffesheim families give throughout the season in London and at their country homes, and by the dignity, grace, aplomb and beauty of many of the leading Jewish hostesses; and in this and in the ready friendliness with which we are apt to meet the stranger within our social gates, we have had a leader and an example in our crowned head, not only of the kingdom, but of our social world as well.

To draw, though, a comparison between London and New York society, and to ignore the important social part played in both by the ever-increasing influence of the country house life, would hardly result, I think, in making either a fair or inclusive estimate of both.

Nothing that I have seen in America of late years has appealed to me as more markedly impressive of the strong ties of blood, manners and traditions still existing between England and the United States than the steady tendency of our republican cousins to adopt our ideals of the country home and its social atmosphere to their own land and needs.

In ten years in America a most astonishing number of superb country palaces, surrounded by gardens and set in parks often of royal beauty and extent, have sprung up throughout the States, and to visit in one of these faultlessly appointed homes is to find one's self surrounded by all the comfort and beauty, and at the same time by all the gracious freedom, that are part and parcel of the best English theory and practice in country entertaining.

There are differences, of course, to be noticed here in our own and transatlantic methods, and some of these differences are to be remarked in the superior luxury in detail observed on the other side of the water. In America a private car or a big, comfortable steam yacht is used not infrequently to carry the guests to and from their hostess'

home, though rarely enough will that same hostess expect her visitor to arrive accompanied by his or her own maid or manservant, and in America I noticed that the preference seemed always in favor of smaller parties of guests than we so often find gathered under one roof in England.

Even the Astors and the Vanderbilts do not entertain so many friends at one time as does the Duchess of Westminster at Eaton Hall, the Marchioness of Londonderry at Wynyard Park, or nearly fifty more ladies of social prominence in English society who could be mentioned; but this is in a great measure explained by the fact that the country houses in the States are not yet built on so extensive a plan as most of those owned by the wealthy, titled and fashionable folk in England.

With the exception, perhaps, of Mr. George Vanderbilt's house in North Carolina and Mr. Tiffany's splendid new house on Long Island, there are, indeed, few, if any, houses in America whereat could be fittingly celebrated that unique and most impressive ceremonial of English country house life—the entertaining of royalty.

This last is the very special feature of fashionable English life, and which, among all modern nations, gives us the right to call ours the most luxurious society. When the Duke of Devonshire recently entertained their majesties at Chatsworth, the outlay necessary while the ducal hospitality was dispensed amounted to one hundred thousand dollars. Such costly and such magnificent entertaining has not yet been known in America, from which the story of most broken records of lordly lavishness comes, and undoubtedly in America such Orientally lavish hospitality will never be known, for in the United States there is no royal state maintained and no royal traditions to live up to. This, then, with the few other points of dissimilarity that I have pointed out, forms in my eyes the only really striking differences that signify when comparing the society of England and the States.



The TEST OF THE WILDERNESS

By Ada Woodruff Anderson



FARMSWORTH drew his fur collar higher and thrust his hands deep into the pockets of his greatcoat. In mid-September it grows cold at Valdez, and the sun had already taken a hurried glance into the Narrows and dropped behind the mountains which walled and overtopped the harbor. Glaciers and snow fields that had dripped briefly in August congealed in every hanging valley, and the boxed wind, drawing through the seaward door of Prince William Sound, sharpened like air in a vast refrigerator.

The crowd which had gathered to witness the arrival and departure of the infrequent steamship from the outside world drifted away, to loiter near the post office for the distribution of the mail, but Farmsworth lingered at the end of the dock, staring off absently across the running white crests to the promontory beyond which the vessel had disappeared. He had finished his season's work, which had embraced miles of trail breaking through the wilderness and the survey and platting of a new town site on the distant Tanana, and was ready to go out to the States for the winter. He was waiting for the return trip of the *Senator*, which would make her last port northward the following day. Still, there had been nothing to delay him the previous steamer, when most of his men had taken passage—nothing but—Mrs. Farrell.

At length he turned and walked irresolutely up to the main street, but he stopped at the first corner and looked back seaward. He was thinking then of Farrell. They would probably bring him from Fairbanks to catch the last boat south to Seattle. Judicial conditions were too crude on the Tanana to hold safely the man who had looted the Gold Bar mine; and they would hurry the necessary proceedings through in time to make the long trail before the season closed. But it was useless for his wife to wait at Valdez. She could never endure that meeting. How could Farrell have dared the thing? With a wife like her, how could he have done it?

At last Farmsworth threw up his head. His face had become suddenly alert, determined, and he swung on his heel and went swiftly on; not in the direction of the new hotel, his usual headquarters when he stopped in town, but toward the row of log cabins which marked the older, quieter district.

"I must see her once more," he told himself, and set his lips, "but it's got to be the last time; it can't go on."

A few cottonwoods, the only trees in the vicinity, shivered complainingly when he entered the small inclosure and stopped to knock at the final door in the row. Then instantly the atmosphere changed. He was admitted into a room all color and warmth. The brown fur of a Kadiak bear was under his feet, and its mate was spread luxuriously beneath the red pillows of a couch. The

windward wall was hung with peltries—the shaggy skin of a mountain goat, several hair seal, two of a finer variety and the velvet of a sea otter. And, set like a torch in the window that opened on the bleak Tanana trail, a geranium, potted in a brilliant Aleut basket, lifted a scarlet bloom.

But Farmsworth felt, without seeing, this harmony. He was looking into the face of the woman who had opened the door. It was a face of light and shade, that spoke the swift thought before the voice found words; a face to hold a man's glance in a crowd.

"I thought you would be in town to-night," she said. "Mail day is almost sure to bring you, and you haven't given me an hour for a long time."

He looked away at the red geranium. He knew there was not another flower like it in Alaska, just as he was sure that in these frozen solitudes this woman, all warmth, color, charm, was the only one of her kind. And her fineness, her isolation, made her less approachable.

"The mail," he repeated. "That's so, the steamer came. It brought you something?"

"No." She smiled, shaking her head, but her lip trembled, and she turned to a small table that held a polished chafing dish on an immaculate white cloth. "The outside world has forgotten me, and I haven't even a magazine. I've allowed my subscription to expire. And you?"

"I? Why, I'm afraid I forgot to ask." He laughed, a short, soft laugh, and watched her bend to light the alcohol lamp. "But I've been over to the Ellamar mine for a week, stopping with Banks. I just came back."

"It's going to be an oyster stew," she said, and lifted her face, again smiling, "and I dreaded more than usual having supper alone. I saw you on the dock, from the post-office corner, and I—waited for you."

Farmsworth's eyes wavered to a picture which hung near the geranium. It was the enlarged photograph of a well-made man, who stood with his hands in his pockets, corduroys tucked into high

laced boots, his broad felt hat turned back from quiet, searching eyes. From the set of his heels on the earth to the squaring of his fine shoulders, and the lift of the prominent chin from the strongly molded neck, it was the pose of a man who is sure of himself, who stays with the thing he undertakes; and that was Farrell.

"Yes?" said Farmsworth at last. "Then I'm more than glad I came." He slipped off his heavy top coat and threw it across a chair, and drew near the table to settle himself, with his back to the photograph, in his favorite place. "That's the worst of this life up here, and it's what every woman faces. Day after day, with no one to talk to. It's the tremendous silence that wears."

She went to an improvised cupboard to bring the necessary tins. His position commanded a view of the shelves when she raised the curtain, and he noticed the two cans were the limit of her supply. She brought them to him to open. "The best Toki Point," she said, and laughed softly, "and fresh cream, Eagle brand."

That was her way, the little soldier, to cover her anxiety and push on pluckily, gayly, in the face of defeat. Not a word of complaint, when any other woman must have sobbed it out, over and over again, and tired his ears. But what would become of her while she waited for Farrell, through the years? She must have asked herself that, and yet she could laugh. She felt that she must keep up the part still, even with him.

He watched her pour a generous portion from the milk tin into the steaming chafing dish and add the oysters. She had a swift, unstudied charm of motion, and her gown, of some soft, warm, brown stuff, had a trick of flowing and clinging in graceful lines. His critical eyes had learned every small neatly mended place at cuff and elbow, but it was always spotless, and seemed almost a part of her. Even the scarlet ribbon, tied in a big flaunting bow under her oval chin, made her more sweetly modest by comparison.

"I don't know whether it's the way

you fix them," he said, presently, "or because they are served in these plates, but I always think your oysters are the best I ever tasted."

She shook her head gravely. "I'm afraid it's the plates."

"Then," he answered, "after this the only oysters I shall want must be served in a white china dish with a gold rim. But—it's the last time." His hand shook and he laid down his spoon. He turned a little, and his eyes sought the photograph. "I needn't tell you the reason, but—it's our last little supper."

She started, and, leaning a little on the table, looked at him in surprise. "You are ready, then, to go out on the *Senator's* down trip?" she said.

"Perhaps. But, whether I go or stay, this must be the last time."

"Oh!" she said, and drew herself erect and laughed. "You mean you saw my empty shelves when I brought the tins. You have guessed I'm not able to meet—further demands. Well, it's true. I am at the end of my money—for a little while. I could teach music or painting," she went on, gravely, "if there were any pupils, or I could do satisfactory sewing, with the smallest possible opening. A boarding house would mean riches, if I could find and furnish a building. And there is the new city hall and the piano, and the miners are beginning to come in; they should make a generous audience, but—I could hardly make up my mind to a concert—even to tide through. It has come to"—her voice broke a little, and she looked over the room slowly, from the rug of the Kadiak bear to the skins on the windward wall—"it has come to—the furs."

"You mean that?" he said, quickly. "It's hard to tell, sometimes, just where your laugh begins or breaks off. But you mean you want to sell these skins?"

"I mean I must. They are Mr. Farrell's, and each one has a history. He traveled Columbia Glacier to reach that goat, and those Kadiak rugs stand for the hunting trip of his life. He told me, if the time came, to have them auctioned. But first they should be advertised, and I need a—a manager. I"—

her glance fell to the gold-rimmed plate and the ready color rippled to her hair—"I thought—perhaps—you—would like to help me."

"Help you? Don't you know that's the one thing I want to do? The only thing that's kept me here—for weeks?" He pushed back his chair and got to his feet. "Don't you know yet—how much I—think of you?"

She too rose, closing her lips on a hard breath. "Yes," she said, quietly; "I do know. You must have liked me at the first to have told me about Marcia Collins." She paused, swaying a little on her feet, but she met his look steadily. "Have you forgotten? It was the day the transport arrived, and I went with the mayor and his wife to the opening of the barracks. You had come the previous day on the passenger ship that brought the officers' families north to spend the summer. I had danced a two-step with you, and we stood at a window looking off through the Narrows. It seemed very strange to you to see that red dawn at midnight, and I said: 'I hope the charm of novelty will stay with you a long time, for afterward, I'm afraid, you're going to find it pretty desolate.' And then you told me. How Marcia had promised to join you in Seattle, to be married and come north with you, and at the last moment had written she had decided to wait until you could go home to New York for her. But you said you saw she was right—this was no place for a woman like her, and that it was something to know she would wait."

"I didn't know her." He lifted his arms with an impatient outward swing and let them drop. "I didn't know you." His voice wavered, and he looked away to the red geranium. "A man may think he cares a lot for a woman, in a comfortable place, with the attractions and luxuries of life all around, but up here in the big wilderness he doesn't think—he knows."

His glance moved to the picture next the casement. He went over and took it in both hands and turned it face to the wall. "I didn't know you," he repeated. "Wait. Listen." He lifted his arm to

arrest her interruption, and came back a few steps. "I understand what I'm saying. I know I shouldn't have trusted myself to come this last time, but, now I'm here, I've got to speak. I've watched you suffer, I've seen you need the common things of life, and I've had to stand aside without a word. I've lain awake nights through, facing it and casting about for the right way to help you. I can't hope to make you understand that, but, don't you see? I can't leave you here, like this, in the grip of winter, and—I can't stay. But it's useless for you to wait. Let me take you away, or, at least, send you back to the States and the people you used to know. I pledge myself not to trouble you—not even to see you again, if you say so."

While he spoke she approached the picture slowly, watching him with steady eyes, but the color deepened in her cheeks—two burning spots. She reached the photograph and turned it back. "I must tell you about Mr. Farrell," she said. "I blame myself for not telling you before, but it was—hard to do, and while there was Marcia, there seemed no need."

She leaned a little on the wall, breathing quickly, with one hand still upon the picture. Farmsworth drew away to the other side of the window, so that the geranium lifted between them its flaring torch. He looked off to the white heights overhanging a far lift of the Tanana trail. His lips were set, and a frowning line contracted his brows.

"I know about him," he said—"all that's necessary to know. But tell me what you wish."

"I have told you," she began, "that I came north with my father, and that he died at Sunrise the next year. We were on a claim far up the Sushitna when his final sickness came. The prospecting trip had left him with little ready money, and he tried to carry on development alone. He had always led a quiet office life, and the hardships were great. He spent himself, and the prospect failed. He suffered cruelly, and there wasn't a doctor, a neighbor, not another cabin, in miles. Not even

an Eskimo had passed in weeks. It was then Mr. Farrell came. He stopped at the door to ask for a supper. He had been delayed, and a cup of coffee, 'most anything, would save him the necessity of making camp for several hours. I did not know him, but I had to appeal to him. I asked him to send me an Indian, anyone, to take us directly down to Sunrise. And he said that he was going that way; that he had a canoe, and could make a comfortable place for father with little delay. Long afterward I learned he was really traveling upstream, with a year's outfit for the Tanana. Some natives whom he had met and befriended during a hunting trip had told him of a rich placer, and shown him a little of the gold. Two of them were guiding him there. But he sent them away and cached his outfit, and turned back down the Sushitna with us."

She paused, and her hold on the picture relaxed. She moved a few steps to the couch, and sank down. But Farmsworth continued to look from the window. A cloud settled over the heights, flooding that upper gorge; and presently across the pane there swept a flurry of snow.

"He was very careful of father," she went on, "and thoughtful of me. I shall never forget. It is as clear as though it happened yesterday. I see him, quiet, cool, alert in every rough water, the canoe a tool in his hands, swinging through riffles, skirting the great whirlpool in Turnagain Arm. And—at the last—when father died, he did everything for me; everything. He stayed on at Sunrise and let his opportunity go. He is not the kind of man to change his mind; he knows what he wants at the start, and, you see, he would have been the one to make that first rich strike on the Tanana."

"I see," said Farmsworth, slowly. "I see. But what he wanted most, just then, was you."

She nodded her head with a shadowy smile. "And we were married there at Sunrise," she said, "and went back up the Sushitna, and found the cache, and finished the long trail to the

Tanana. But, meantime, some one else discovered the placer, and the stampede was before us. He was forced to stake miles below discovery. Then, in the busy season, when time counts most, the camp was too rough for me, and he left his claim and took me up to Circle City. Our little baby was born there, at Circle, and we buried her there—the next spring.”

Her lips trembled, and for an instant she settled against the pillows and pressed her fingers to her closed eyes. “After that,” she went on, hurriedly, “he brought me out to Valdez and returned, unhampered, to work his claim. He travels very quickly alone, and without me expected to make the trip easily when the season closed, and over the first snows, in time to catch the last steamer of the year. But he had only a remnant of his reserve fund to invest in his outfit, and he divided with me. Afterward, when he was gone, I found he had divided again, and added the half of his supplies to mine. Do you know what that means? He went into the wilderness to do the hardest manual labor without the right nourishment, and never quite enough of any kind. What he did, in this cruel North, is a man’s greatest test. I never for a moment forgot. And sometimes I have carried those tins back unopened to the shelf because I——” She paused, then added, very softly: “But up here to love—is to sacrifice.”

Farmsworth turned for the first time since she began to speak, and looked at her. The hardness had gone out of his face. “I grant that,” he said. “To love—is to sacrifice. And it’s privation that brings out the soldier in a woman, too, if it’s there, and shows a man whether she’s worth it. Not one in a thousand can take the test, but a man”—his voice broke; he looked again to the darkening trail—“a man would take any defeat—lightly—that gave him that one.”

“But I have been his defeat from the start. He had everything clear before him. He was meant for success.”

Farmsworth was silent. Presently she said: “You see, I must sell the furs.”

“Yes,” he answered, “yes, you must sell the furs. I’ll do what I can.”

“He may need the money, and I must go to him now, right away, before it’s too late.”

“I understand; and I’ll take you, if you think you can bear it. But don’t try to tell me the rest. It’s enough for me to know you accept everything. Even the dishonor—takes the glory of sacrifice. He did it—for you.”

She started to her feet. A sudden fear rose in her face. “What do you know?” she asked.

“The truth. I was there at the time. I had just finished surveys at the Gold Bar mine.”

She moved a step and stood staring at his broad back. “Do you mean that you saw Mr. Farrell on the Tanana, while you were at Fairbanks?”

“Yes, I saw him that once—the day they brought him back from the Valdez trail. I knew him directly from this picture I’ve always seen here in this room. He had given up work on his own claim—it hadn’t paid the year’s development—and came down to take the management at Gold Bar—the same morning I started for the outside. In that way I missed meeting him, and I happened not to have heard his name. But I stopped at Fairbanks for Morrison, the owner at Gold Bar, to look up a new thawing apparatus he expected, and arrange for its transportation to the mine, and so was there—that day.”

“That day,” she repeated. “And they brought him back from the Valdez trail. He was on his way home; he was ill, hurt. Mr. Farmsworth, look at me. What happened?”

He turned. “You don’t know?” he said. “No one told you, and all Alaska knew. See here—see here—he’s all right.” He took her hand and led her back to the couch. “He isn’t sick or hurt. It’s only that he’s—well—in trouble. Sit down and let me tell you. Didn’t he write that he was taking charge at Gold Bar for the winter; but that Morrison, who had met with an accident and was anxious to reach the States, had promised to stay on at the

mine until he could make a quick trip out to Valdez for you?"

She shook her head slowly. "No, I haven't heard from him—a word—in two months."

"And you never heard anything about the trouble at Gold Bar? You don't know the sluices were opened and robbed of the clean-up—about three thousand in dust?"

She shook her head again, slowly. "And he?" she whispered.

"Why, he—it was the day he started for Valdez. They were having a clean-up every second day, and it happened on the alternate night during the one hour it's nearest dark. You see, the man who managed the scheme must have understood the mine. The engineer was held up at just the right time, when he was practically alone. The machinery was stopped, shutting off the water and holding the dump car in the shaft—with the miners waiting and wondering below—while the copper plates were lifted in the sluices and put back."

"And they believed—" she said, and stopped. Her face was very white, and she leaned back on the pillows, her head against the wall, and her hand crept up to ease the scarlet ribbon at her throat.

Farmsworth went over to the table and brought her a glass of water, steadying it while she drank. "Yes," he answered; "they believed it was the new manager. He had said that all he needed was the money to get to the outside world, to find a capitalist who could put in the necessary machinery, and his own claim would rival the Gold Bar. He had tried to bond a small interest in his property for enough to cover transportation to the States and east, and failed. And he had said more than once that it went all against him to ask his wife to bury herself another winter in Alaska."

"There was a trial?" she asked.

"Only the preliminary trial, to justify his arrest."

"But it was proved he was down the Valdez trail when it occurred?" She started erect, eager, expectant, her hands clinched at her sides.

"It was supposed he went only a short distance and returned. You see, the engineer recognized his manager's coat. It was a brown corduroy that Farrell had worn about the mine. A piece of the lining was missing about the size of the rough black mask the man had used, and there was a curious rectangular tear in the shoulder, made that morning by a dump car while Farrell evened a hitch in the tram. They were changing shifts at the time, and he kept the car from dropping. It was a cool and brave thing to do, and made him solid with the men. It saved several lives."

"But they believed it," she said. "You believed it. Oh, you don't know him! You don't know how just, how honest, he is. Why, once on the Sushitna he went back two miles, wading knee deep in marsh sometimes, to pay an Eskimo packer a dollar which, in the hurry of breaking camp, he had overlooked. The natives, everyone who knew him, trusted him."

"I know him better than you think." Farmsworth paused, and a great compassion transfigured his face. "You've taught me to know him. But it's enough that you believe in him. Nothing else counts."

He turned and carried the glass back to the table. Only a little of the water remained, but it shook in his hand so that a few drops marred the immaculate cloth. He stood for a brief interval, in uncertainty, looking down at the chafing dish and gold-rimmed plates. Then his face became suddenly determined. He swung on his heel and returned to her.

"The man who did it," he said, and his voice took a dominant note, "had Morrison's full confidence. They had known each other in the States. He was above suspicion. I don't want to make any excuse for him, but it never occurred to him that it would involve Farrell, or anyone. He happened to find that coat in the cabin where he had been given accommodation for the night and used it for a disguise, and the whole evidence hinged on it. He was about—*Farrell's size.*"

He paused, squaring his broad shoulders, and his glance swept down over his own generously made frame, and challenged her eyes.

"You knew him, then," she said, slowly. "You knew him and were silent."

Farmsworth met the accusation fully, lifting his chin a trifle more, but his eyes clouded and a quiver swept his resolute face.

"You knew him," she repeated, and caught a great breath. She drew back, and he saw the reproach in her face change to incredulous surprise and settle in unspeakable conviction. "*It was you.*"

He moved then, unsteadily, to the window, and stood bracing himself with his hand on the casing. Once he drew his palm across his forehead. Moisture clung there in drops.

Finally he turned. "The snow is here," he said, quietly, "but I shall get the best huskies and sled I can find, and Eskimo to break trail, and I shall make Fairbanks—in time."

She had no answer, but stood motionless while he crossed the room. Only her eyes, grown dark and misty, followed him steadily, in intensity of appeal, while he lifted his greatcoat and, throwing it on, picked up his hat. He opened the door and went out, closing it softly behind him.

He stood for a moment, turning up his fur collar, and looked off through the falling snow. "But she believes in him," he repeated, under his breath. "Nothing else counts." And he threw up his head and started resolutely toward the little thoroughfare.

II.

Mrs. Farrell reached the brow of a knoll and halted, while the dogs, obeying their Eskimo driver, pulled slowly up the remaining distance and stopped. Below her Farmsworth's trail stretched on and on over the great white plain, until the two streaks made by his sled runners seemed to meet and the tracks of his huskies ended in a blur. The fur

hood of her parka offered no protection to the sight, and the glare of the late sun on the snow blinded her. She drew off her mitten and pressed her fingers to her aching eyes, and, shading them with her hand, looked, for relief, to the dark belt of spruce which girded a bench to the left.

The guide, Eversik, followed her glance and smiled broadly. "Camp," he said, and elaborated the statement with many swift gestures, including the timber belt, the making of fire, partaking of refreshment and spreading of the sleeping equipment.

She nodded a reluctant assent, and he opened her remaining Kadiak rug, which she had left folded on the sled, and, holding the lap while she took her place, threw it over her and tucked her in. Analuk, his wife, ran forward; the huskies leaped in their traces to follow, while Eversik, with much shouting, closed the rear.

It was the first time Mrs. Farrell realized that she was tired. But to spur her flagging circulation, she had been forced to walk the last hour, and, eager to abridge delay, she had hurried beyond her strength. For the first time, also, with this necessity of making early camp, she saw the futility of her hope to overtake Farmsworth. But there still remained a chance of reaching Fairbanks before he could swear to that monstrous fabrication. It was a fabrication; she had known it that night, after he had left her, when, recovering from the shock, she had been able to take up clearly, point by point, all that he had told her. She saw where the truth ended and the full significance of his return to Fairbanks. And she had tried to find him, to stop him, but, failing, had made swift preparations to follow him. He had made this possible by remembering to send a purchaser for the furs.

The sun dropped low and hung, blood-red, above the mountains she had left behind her, seaward. Presently it was gone. The wind sharpened, drawing across the plain, and the moisture started by her effort in climbing the knoll seemed to congeal in every pore.

But at last they gained the friendly timber. The Eskimos cleared swiftly a little space from snow, and set up her canvas shelter fronting a great camp fire. She threw herself down on the bearskin in the warmth, and drifted into the sleep of exhaustion.

Hours later she was roused by a big, deep voice speaking a mixture of English and Eskimo. She started to her elbow and saw a broad-chested man, who leaned on a crutch, warming an injured limb at the fire, while he talked to Eversik. But the change of position brought her face into the light, and the trespasser stopped speaking and looked at her in astonishment.

"Madam," he said, at last, and pulled off his hat, "madam, I beg your pardon. You see, we were late making a camp, and this leg bothered me. But I didn't know until this minute why this fellow objected to sharing his fire. I'm sorry I woke you, and I won't trouble you any more. Steve, here, will soon have things fixed."

A second man, who stood waiting in the shadows, turned to find another camping place.

"But you are hurt," she said. "Rest here until your own fire is ready."

"Oh, it's nothing. Why, it happened a couple of months ago. I slipped and broke a bone at the Gold Bar. But it failed to knit right, and I'm making my way down to a surgeon. It gives me an excuse to spend the winter in the States."

He smiled, a smile of the eyes with a deepening of the genial wrinkles at the corners of the lids, and turned to follow his companion.

"Wait," she said. "You spoke of the Gold Bar mine."

"Yes." He swung back. "You've heard of it, have you? Then you know something about me. I'm Morrison. I hope I've been given a clean record."

"You may judge of that," she answered. "I've heard of you—particularly—through Mr. Farmsworth. And I know the Gold Bar property. I—we—my husband and I—expected to locate it, but we were too late. I am—Mrs. Farrell."

A flush rose in her cheeks, and her glance fell before the sudden keenness of his look. "I see," he said, briefly. "I see. I met Farmsworth just this side of Fairbanks."

"And you might have passed me to-night!" She rose to her feet. "Mr. Morrison, I hoped to see you. I tried to overtake Mr. Farmsworth; I tried to find him—to stop him—at Valdez. There is testimony—a confession he is bent on making at Fairbanks. It would be perjury—a crime."

There was a brief interval during which Morrison continued to scrutinize her face. Her lip trembled, and he saw the mute appeal rise through the anguish in her eyes. "So," he said, at last—"so you don't want him to give that testimony?"

"No. It would be monstrous. I—I could never endure it; and Mr. Farrell—when the time came—would not allow it."

"That's what I told Farmsworth. Why, the one thing Farrell refused to tell me was the name of the miner who helped him that night. He made a clean breast of the whole scheme to me, privately, and was ready to repeat it in court, with that one exception. He said he had planned and engineered it, and was responsible; this workman was just an instrument; he had simply obeyed orders. And in the face of that—when I explained it to Farmsworth—he answered: 'I'm going to give my testimony, Morrison; all I ask of you is to keep quiet. Farrell will nerve himself to it; he can nerve himself to anything for his wife's sake—you'd understand that if you knew her—he committed that crime for her!'"

She moved back and put her hand out, groping for the source near her, and steadied herself a little on the bole. Morrison still watched her, but presently a soft sparkle rose in his eyes. "You don't look like a woman to connive in crime," he said, "and you don't look like a woman to willfully spoil a man's life, but you're responsible for two mighty good men."

"Do you mean that?" she asked, eagerly. "I don't understand much about

law, but could I in some way be held responsible and share—or—influence—the judgment?"

"No," he answered, and his big voice took a soft undertone. "No, we couldn't even work you in on the grounds of conspiracy. But it's all right. Yes, it is. I talked it all over with Farmsworth. I was hard on him—you see, I didn't know you then—and I put things pretty strong. But it was no use. I couldn't stop him any more than I could turn a young moose in a stampede, and when I reminded him that Farrell was wearing that coat when he was brought back to Fairbanks, and other men had seen it, he began to elaborate on another yarn. So—well, I couldn't see him perjure himself—he's needed too much on the Tanana—and the best I could do was to get word to the judge to dismiss the case. I wrote it had been settled out of court."

"You mean," she said, and her body rocked a little; she locked and unlocked her hands—"you mean the trial can end without a—a sentence?"

"Yes. Farmsworth has the authority to stop the prosecution. I should have turned back with him, but this leg makes travel slow."

The other camp fire began to send long tongues of flame into the darkness. He threw his arm, with a comprehensive gesture, toward it. "Steve's waiting," he said, and bowed, smiling, and swung away on his crutch.

She watched him go. After a while she followed him. He was seated on the end of a log, waiting for some bacon to sizzle in a long-handled frying pan set in the edge of the fire. The slices fluted, and he reached and turned them dexterously. Presently he lifted them

out on a hot tin plate and dropped a juicy elk steak into the fat. Then he looked up at her. "So," he said, and the humorous lines deepened in his face—"so you've come over to share my little supper; that's nice of you. Have that seat on those blankets, there. You see, I'm doing things myself; Steve's got to hustle for wood."

"I came," she said, and remained standing—"I know you did it for Mr. Farmsworth's sake—but I came because I forgot to thank you."

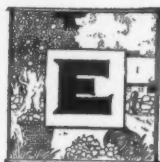
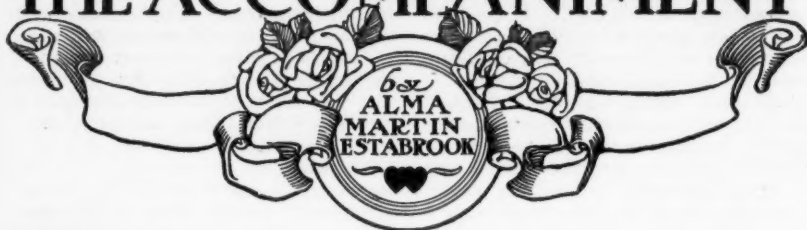
"That's all right." He paused to turn the steak, and repeated: "That's all right. I did it for him, yes, but I was mighty bothered about Farrell. I thought a good deal of him; I do yet. And that first five minutes I saw you and heard you talk, I felt a lot worse. But now, I guess the one I've got to be sorry for—is—just Billy Farmsworth."

There was a brief silence. He bent and investigated the steak. Then she said, very gently, controlling the break in her voice: "He was the best friend—I ever had. If, any time, I can do something for you," and she looked at his disabled limb, "I hope you will let me know."

"All right, I will. In fact"—he paused and lifted his glance with the sparkle lurking in his eyes—"I'm thinking of giving you a chance now. You've stood this trip fine, haven't you? I thought so. And you'll reach Fairbanks inside of two days. And—well, you see, Farrell knows the Tanana, and he can manage men, and, with you there on the ground to look after him, there isn't another man I'd sooner put in charge. I wish you'd get him to stay on at Gold Bar."



THE ACCOMPANIMENT



EBERTON'S sally, ran round the table with a gay little ripple. He leaned forward in the light of the Blessing dinner candles, an unhandsome man of the Brobdignagian type, whose genial eyes looked complacently upon his world as upon an audience accustomed to yielding him its support.

Eloise Honeyman, the honor guest, aroused herself from the polite listlessness into which she had drooped beneath the droning monody of the man who had brought her out, and challenged him with a kind of brilliant insolence.

She was a cold little thing, with an oval face and eyes that nobody pretended to read; but Eberton, regarding her with aroused interest, felt that beneath her show of indifference she might be tremendously alive. At least, he liked the sensation she gave him of dipping boldly into the pool of his mind and stirring it to unaccustomed ripples.

There were those who lapped at Miss Honeyman's cleverness as kittens lap at cream, but it was a glittering bauble to Eberton, which she threw out partly in challenge and partly in mere zest of the game. And presently he found himself catching it and throwing it back to her with a swiftness of aim and a surety that seemed to give her unmistakable pleasure. For people usually tumbled over themselves in such awkward mental gymnastics when they tried to catch what she said, or stood dully by, letting it fall with the chill click of marbles striking on a tile floor.

She saw at once that his cleverness

was not of a delicate sort, that there were no pencillings of light and shadow, no fine touches that brought the quick mist of feeling to the eyes, but its ruggedness was not distasteful to her; she liked it, indeed, just as she liked his clear-cut ugliness and the erect carriage of his gray head, and the air of success and mastery that was his. For she had no pity for failure. It aroused in her nothing but a furious protest, an utter bewilderment that men should throw down their arms and acknowledge defeat. Were not success and happiness and fame and all the things for which they fought to be wrested of life, when life itself was to be compelled, even as she was compelling it?

The touch of a merciless inheritance was upon her, but never since they had gone slipping away, one by one, those others of her family who had gone down to early defeat before the grim enemy that constantly menaced it, and had left her to face it alone, had she lifted a beggar's palms to life. What she got of strength and red corpuscles, of unharassed days and sleepful nights, she fought for, inch by inch and hour by hour, maintaining always the indomitable will that sustained her, and gallantly holding her own; so that the feel and the thrill of success made her impatient of failure in others.

She asked for no alms. Why should she? She could not have what other women had of life, to be sure, for even her audaciousness would not let her go out to meet love when death loomed big and fearsome in the brightness of the way. But she could know all that good fellowship meant and the flashing and

interflashing of spirits, and the keen delight of mental exultation—for her brain was well, thank God, if her body ailed, and of the two, if either needed support or stimulant, she was glad it should be the body, for to go feeling one's way, slow step by slow step, in painful mental feebleness, would be undurable. And if she could not drain life's glass to the lees—as her wish would have been—at least she might snatch a few eager sips until she should have quaffed some of its enchanting rainbow gleams.

She had met Eberton on several occasions since her arrival as the Blessings' house guest, and had each time been attracted by some quality in his personality. A certain luster of his mind appealed to her as the iridescence over a vase of the potter's cunning, and, although she saw at once that his vanity often approached the formidable, she only smiled, for of the men she had known who did not possess egoism in some form or other, only a few had been worth while. Besides, what did a bit of inoffensive vanity amount to if a man did not give you "chalk for cheese"?

Listening while he talked to the accustomed plaudits of those about him, she let her eyes travel around the table until they rested on Mrs. Eberton. She was laughing at the moment with the young fellow beside her, and the laugh, low and pregnant, held the last note of her girlishness, for she was no longer young—there was a daughter almost eighteen and a son as tall as his father—nor was she pretty, but she had a delightful comeliness, with a vitality that made amends for several other things, Miss Honeyman told herself. As for her mentality, her mind seemed to be quite as dimpled as her soft round face; no subtle meanings were hidden in the depths of her frank brown eyes nor in the curves of her smiling lips. She was, as one could see with half an eye, a lucid, practical woman, with a very potential charm. But why, oh, why in the huge grab bag of destiny did men like Eberton always draw women like her?

To be sure, she breathed of a certain success, just as she fluttered of pros-

perity; she had a ready grace and a kindly tact, with the most equable disposition imaginable. But was this enough—enough for a man with Eberton's ability and attributes? It was not, however, with a desire to uncover any possible wounds, nor to peer into carefully closed closets, that she gave herself up to a decided and lively interest in the Ebertons.

"Is there a cross-lots cut to your friendship, Miss Honeyman?" Eberton asked, coming to find her later in the evening. "If there is, I wish you would point it out to me. Mrs. Blessing tells me you are only to be here a few weeks, and in that time I cannot hope to get far along the worn path of tiresome convention. And I want to know you."

She lifted her face to his. It sparkled and glowed against the dull background of her chair like some warm-hued blossom.

"Why?" she asked. "Why do you want to know me?"

"Because I have a well-defined notion of the fitness of things," he smiled.

"And you think we should be friends?"

"I am sure of it."

"Else——?"

"Else we shall both miss a good deal," he declared, promptly.

She smiled, nodding thoughtfully.

"I thought some such thing myself at dinner," she admitted.

"You see," he exclaimed, eagerly, "the proof is established. It lies in our both having felt that way about it. You remember, don't you, what somebody says about time being made for ordinary people? That it is only the doubtful ones who need to be tried? Now, we are plainly not of the ordinary. Shall we not be friends, then, at once?" And he held out his hand to her, smiling down upon her.

For answer she put her hand into his, meeting his eyes with her clear, cordial ones.

"Gladly," she said, "and, truly, I should like nothing better."

And an odd tri-cornered friendship had its beginning with that evening—for Mrs. Eberton and Miss Honeyman

seemed to find themselves equally drawn to each other. The Ebertons both had the leisure to devote to the girl's entertainment, and as Mrs. Blessing happened to be particularly engrossed for the time in matters that were of small interest to her guest, the arrangement was an admirable one.

To those, however, who came presently to observe, Mrs. Eberton appeared curiously as the gracious figure of Propriety in the prow of the boat that bore Eberton and Miss Honeyman along on the current of their mutual appreciation. That she lent a very willing presence, none who saw could doubt, nor that she was serenely content with her own place in the swift-moving little craft. If she apprehended any shoals she gave no sign of it, and her faith in a secure landing seemed absolute.

"She has the most comfortable domestic *credo* of any woman I ever knew," Mrs. Blessing remarked, with astonishment, commenting on the affair to her husband. "For the life of me I can't understand her serenity in the matter."

"It's easily enough understood, it seems to me," he replied. "Eloise hasn't enthralled any of Eberton's senses. It is only his intellectuality that makes its obeisance to her, and Mrs. Eberton is clever enough to see it."

His wife moved her plump shoulders characteristically.

"Locomotor ataxia of the heart would go badly with a man like Eberton," she said.

"Nonsense, Grace. There isn't the least danger. Besides, Mrs. Eberton is as fond of her as he, and enjoys her just as much."

There came a day, however, when Mrs. Eberton was no longer one of the little party. She had gone, her husband told them, to join her mother in the West, and would be away indefinitely. The summons had come unexpectedly, and there was not time for explanations and good-bys.

When he sought the girl a buoyancy was over him of which he seemed not even vaguely aware, but which she did not misinterpret. She had seen from

the first that Mrs. Eberton was accustomed to yield to him whatever lime-light there might be in any situation, however trivial, and that her own shadow never bathed in it, even dippingly. That she was a woman whose senses were easily appealed to, Miss Honeyman had also quickly perceived. She had seen her sit for hours at a time drinking in the beauty of sound or color. Movement pleased her, too. She danced like her daughter and enjoyed it as keenly. But when it came to the measuring of words, she left that to Eberton. Her blood moved, and life was sweet and keen to her, but she possessed a large tendency to worship, and her husband was the shrine before which her idolatrous soul delighted to make its unostentatious devotions. Presiding gracefully over his shining board, she slipped away when he set his table for a mental feast.

And now it was as if, unconsciously weary of the simple daily fare of milk and bread to which he had been so long accustomed, he had turned with eagerness, on the opportunity, to the nectarines and sparkling Burgundy that had always more or less tempted him.

The perversities of the girl's mind delighted him, and he gave himself up to his pleasure in it with a frankness that must have touched the note of her vanity that now and then rang with unmistakable clearness. He came to her smug in his confidence in his own capacities, eager to pit his wit against hers, to match with his her humor that had now the delicate perfume of a flower and now came like a breeze from the sea, blowing strong and fresh and crisp, with a tang of salt to it.

And for a little the untrammelled friendship gave him all the zest he had expected of it. He had no intensity of feeling—or so he was always telling himself—but she made him feel, and see, and thrill with the joy of unaccustomed receptivity.

Then gradually, to his immense astonishment, he came to know, quite unmistakably, that he was failing in the challenge. The effort of response tired him. His wit was perverse and obsti-

nate. There were times when all his effort could not compel it. At last he knew the taste of failure, and, bewildered and determined, made furious but futile efforts to put the bitter thing aside.

He saw that the vividness of the girl's pleasure in their intercourse was gone. She endured him, and still sought, now and then, to stimulate him into something like his old brilliancy, but he knew that she had little faith in succeeding, and that the effort tired her. And while she wearied, plainly if politely, of him, he also began to be a little bored with the high plane of her intellectuality. He had always prided himself on his taste for rare elevations, but he now admitted, with an odd sense, half of chagrin, half of bravado, that the valley of the commonplace held a very potent charm for him, with its calmness and its lack of fatigue.

The plash of small talk became as grateful and as easing to him as the murmur of summer waves; and the dribble of feeble wit, once so distasteful, had now a not uncomfortable sound. He wanted to relax—to have done with effort, to yawn broadly and boldly in the face of something, he did not know what, and then go away, and at an adequate distance try to understand his ignominious failure in the contest to which he had taken himself with such confidence.

But the inquisitorial task was spared him.

He was sitting one evening alone on the Blessing gallery. They were dancing indoors, and he had come out to smoke. And as he sat in a shaded corner, Blessing and Eloise Honeyman came and stood by the rail not a dozen feet from him.

"So Eberton has fizzled out, eh?" Blessing asked.

For a moment the girl made no reply; then her voice, half impatient, half weary, drifted over to where he sat.

"Don't let us talk of him," she begged.

"Disappointed in him, are you?" Blessing questioned, lounging against the rail.

Eberton saw her throw out her hands.

"Not any more than I am with myself. I—I have been as blind as he. We all seem to have been blind together. Not one of us has understood."

"That Mrs. Eberton is the melody and Eberton the echo?" Blessing remarked, quietly.

"You knew?" she cried. "You understood? Oh, why didn't you tell me?"

"I knew you would find out for yourself in good time. Most people don't, but I was sure you would. Do you know how Eberton has always struck me? As a nice little, thin tune whistled rather indifferently to a Strauss setting."

The girl nodded slowly, with acquiescence.

"And I—I thought her only the accompaniment," she confessed; "and a rather inadequate one at that."

"She is clever—c'ever enough to make you think it. You see—with a smile—'she loves him.'"

"To think," Miss Honeyman murmured, full of the humility of her mistake, "how we have misjudged her!"

Then they went in.

Eberton sat on, too dazed to move, too numbed to think clearly. "A thin tune whistled rather indifferently to a Strauss setting." Oh, the sting of that! And was it true? Was it? He flung away his cigar and tramped the porch, every fiber of him quivering, torn between resentment and humiliation. Blind? Had he been so blind as that? Did the long intimacy between man and wife induce an inevitable blindness? Well, he would try now with all the strength there was in him to open his mind's eyes and see things as they were, as they had been with him and with her.

He struggled to be just; he labored to be fair, but the old complacency was there, and his pride made bitter outcry. Painfully he admitted to himself that his wife had always, and quite naturally, seemed to him the accompaniment. Was it not the wife's part? There had

been times—if he meant to be honest with himself he must admit them—when he had felt that she limped along in a hopeless effort to fit this phrase or that, in a feverish endeavor to rise to the climaxes, spoiling the delicate nuances of the theme—his theme—and well-nigh outraging the spirit of it. And all the while had she been covering "the thin tune" in one place or strengthening it in another, drowning rapid skips in the deep choral of her simplicity, or bolstering up an attenuated phrase with the silvery arpeggios of her grace and sweetness?

The question tormented him, but he was not ready to answer it. His pride was of forced growth. It was as plump as a market-fattened goose. Adulation, flattery, success, had fed it. No half-starved creature, it. It would die hard.

Blessing's words came back to him: "She is clever enough to make you think it. You see, she loves him." Was that true, too, that her cleverness was so far above his, her love so much more unselfish? Had she lifted him to his niche and kept him there? He looked back along the way—their way together—and shuddered. A thousand confirming things loomed out of it, and the confrontation sent the blood over his face in painful waves and made him sick with shame.

He seemed suddenly to see that her laugh had led the applause that had always been his, that her signals had kept him from danger, safe on the right track, that her suggestions had stimulated his humor, and her vivid words atop his homely observations had made them bloom like ugly mounds that bear aloft glowing rose trees.

He went in and said good-night to his hostess, and stumbled along toward home. He was not yet thinking clearly. His brain was in a tumult and his pride was not stilled. Whatever dominated him, whether it was that—his wounded vanity, that would ease itself of its pain and heal itself of its wounds in his wife's love and the deeps of her adoration, or his love of her, strength-

ened and wide-eyed at last—he did not know, but something within him cried out for her and would not be silenced. He wanted her. He wanted her! And he must have her at once.

So he sent for her, and she came at the end of a fortnight, wondering a little, but unalarmed. It was not her way to keep her eyes glued to her window looking out for unhappiness. She never saw it till it was there, pounding boldly on her stoutly resisting panel, and even then she was very apt to let it pound a good many times before she took it in.

Now, as she appeared behind a burdened Pullman porter, it was with her usual buoyant manner and her air of unassailable happiness.

"What is it?" she cheerfully inquired, when he had put her in the carriage and they were rolling homeward. "What made you send?"

"I couldn't do without you," he answered, humbly.

She slipped her fingers into his, and something lit far back in the depths of her eyes, but he did not see.

"Of course you couldn't," she laughed; "not any more than I could do without you. We are a pair of silly old indispensables."

"I didn't know it, Kate," he cried. "I didn't know it until you had gone. Can you forgive me?" and all his humility and confession and appeal were in his eyes.

She laughed her blithesome laugh of sheer content.

"There is nothing to forgive, foolish," she murmured; "nothing. You have always known. It is only that absence is such a capital clarifier, and—well, even love like ours does need it once in a long, long while, you know. How could it be otherwise, pray? We can't love like the immortals when we are such earthy things. But yes, you have always known, dear— How smart Gordon looks in his new livery! I like the buff and black, don't you? And haven't you a new mate in with Whirlalong? Oh, but it is good to be home!"

THE NEW DRAMATIC SEASON



Edna May still unspoiled. Her delightful unconsciousness preserved in "The Catch of the Season." John Drew's new play, "De Lancey," a gentleman's outfit. "Man and Superman," by Bernard Shaw, the most interesting presentation of the season, in spite of its "un-actability." W. W. Jacobs' play, "Beauty and the Barge," a grouping of nautical types who mistake rumpus for drama



THE opening of the New York season is beginning to change its date, and it is quite likely that future seasons will start operations in early August. Managers talk of the enormous number of "strangers" within the city's gates, and allude enviously to the one or two daring attractions that have kept open all summer. Certain it is that the roof gardens are scarcely sufficient to cater to the metropolitan need. Although it is usually suggested that the intellect is weaker in summer than it is in winter, I can see no excuse for such a proposition. Probably if New York managers gave the people a pretext for coming back to town, it would be joyously hailed.

Two openings claimed me almost before I had time to put away my sea legs in tar balls. I discovered that Mr. Raymond Hitchcock had taken possession of his old stronghold, Wallack's, and was there giving nightly evidence of his desire to be funny, in a piece by Edward E. Kidder, entitled "Easy Dawson." You may be quite sure that I hurried to Wallack's, rejoiced to get into the presence of a genuine American comedian, as an antidote to the London brand. Hitchcock is my particular favorite, whom I have watched interestedly from his very start, and, although "Easy Dawson" had been running for two weeks when I approached

it, I went with a first-night exhilaration and a keen expectation of a merry time.

The result was signally discouraging. The unfortunate Hitchcock had fallen into the hands of a playwright who used to cater to the late Sol Smith Russell, a character actor of a sort of Sunday-school caliber. One would have thought that Mr. Henry W. Savage, with his accurate knowledge of Mr. Hitchcock's tendencies, as shown in "King Dodo" and "The Yankee Consul," would have steered his bark away from maudlin waters. Nobody can be as exquisitely maudlin as the American playwright when, in his provincialism, he tries to provide pathos. In "Easy Dawson" the admirable Hitchcock was actually displayed in the first act as a vinous father, attired in the garb of a village fireman, pledging his word to his dear little daughter to "stop drinking."

The very expression is nauseating for Broadway use. A hero may "stop drinking" on Third Avenue, on the Bowery or in the regions of the Bronx, but educated, literate people find nothing pathetic in it. It is the pathos of the hod carrier and the dulcet tragedy of Jefferson Market Police Court. Mr. Hitchcock, who suggests the American *bon viveur*, and whose brand of humor is distinctly intellectual, seemed thrown away amid these impoverished surroundings. It was a willful waste of good material, and "Easy Dawson"

throughout was cheap, mechanical flub-dub, and nothing else. The actor was flaunted through three dismal acts, cast into an occasional song, for no rhyme or reason, and compelled to exude primitive "humor."

Even this hard luck did not entirely squelch him. His marvelous gift of unctuousness peeped forth from Kidder's kiddings, and it was possible for the uninitiated to realize that the star of "Easy Dawson" was an actor of unusual quality. All the types in the play were just common stage types, the imaginings of a stage carpenter rather than of a playwright. There was the "village flirt," who has done duty ever since villages were footlighted; there was the "irrepressible youngster," whose irrepressibility has become a stage tradition, and there was the usual young lover with the usual flood of inane speeches. Were it not that Mr. Hitchcock's importance had been injected into this hodgepodge, I should dismiss it with a couple of lines, for it is worth no more.

Across the street, at Daly's Theater, "The Catch of the Season" had raced me from London, and got in ahead. There it was, established on Broadway, though I seemed just to have left it on the Strand. As I wrote you last month, it was the best of the London musical shows, and this need not be accepted as an enthusiastic compliment. It had been made the vehicle for the return of Miss Edna May, who, after her success in "The Schoolgirl" last season, is beginning to be looked upon as a profit in her own country. The exotic forcing of Miss May, and the diligence with which she has been plied with rôles that seemed to fit her, are interesting to reflect upon. Nine girls out of ten must gradually win recognition with such deft managerial tactics.

I admit that I have looked upon Edna May as a pretty simpleton, who made a hit by a fluke in "The Belle of New York," and there stood on her laurels. I gladly confess that I was wrong. Last season she showed me that, and this season she offers further proof of intelligence. In "The Catch of the Sea-

son" she played the part "created"—if I may use such an expression in connection with musical comedy—by Miss Ellaline Terriss, a beauty, and a charming little actress. Edna May succeeded completely. She was not only as pretty as a picture, but almost as animated as one of those that the biograph displays.

That she has lived down her fatal prettiness seems assured, and oh, what a difficult thing it must be! Just imagine, if you can, the psychological import of seeing yourself picture-postal-carded all over the civilized world, of noting your features on cigarettes and candies and gewgaws. It must be ghastly—a cordial invitation to the demon of self-consciousness to come in and jump all over you. A girl who can absolutely disregard all this, and shut her eyes to the counterfeit presentment of her own charms, must own a well-balanced mentality.

Yet in "The Catch of the Season" Miss May was as fresh, as unassuming, as "reluctant" and as pleasing as a girl with her spurs to win. She was diffident and utterly lacking in self-consciousness. She acted with simple grace and naturalness, and she sang as though she had been trying hard to improve herself. I submit that these facts should be recognized; they are so unusual on the stage. I've seen many an artist hopelessly ruined by a too exultant criticism, and the list of pretty girls who have remained merely pretty as long as their good looks lasted—and then it was too late to buckle to—is an expensive one.

Mr. George Edwardes of London was evidently unable to cope with Miss Edna May. Charles Frohman of New York took up the task and succeeded. It is a feather in his cap. I am inclined to imagine that the young woman has an artistic future, and as an instance of "putting a beggar on horseback"—I mean no disrespect to Miss May—I regard her as an almost phenomenal enterprise.

"The Catch of the Season" was very much altered for New York, as I suggested last month that it would be. The

American songs that filled it in London had to be eliminated here. It is not a great show, by any means, but it is a pleasing one. It has an atmosphere of refinement that musical comedy in this city so frequently lacks. Men make musical comedy for other men, and women patronize it because their masculine belongings approve.

It is a fact that the entertainments appealing primarily to women are those that achieve the most enduring success. The ways of a woman in the theatrical world are very persuasive. Once let a woman perceive that her femininity is interested in a particular brand of diversion, and to it she will drag husband and father, brother and cousin, to say nothing of fiancé. How many attractions of the musical comedy ilk are there that are not degradations to the woman of refinement? With loathsome comedians, gutter funmakers, flannel-mouthed utterers of barroom witticisms, smoking-room anecdotes, the feminine theatergoer is in a veritable quandary. "The Catch of the Season" elucidates that. What many term "lack of ginger" is lack of slap-stick. "Ginger" is a very pernicious word when used dramatically. Ginger may be a good thing for a pain in the stomach, but it is not satisfactory for outraged decency. Farren Soutar, Fred Kaye, Fred Wright, Jr., Miss Vivian Vowles and Miss May Greet aided and abetted Miss Edna May in a piece that, while never exciting, was soothing, well-dressed, drawing-room and innocuous. It is not food for the theatergoing monkey.

John Drew usually gets his coats and his plays in London. He affects a "gentleman's outfit." There is an unsubstantiated rumor that these are found more easily in London. Of course there is no ground for such a rumor. It is to be accounted for by the fact that the American gentleman is rarely staged, as playwrights do not seem to consider him worth while, and if they do get hold of him, he generally turns out to be a "Wall Street broker" or a ninnified "man about town."

Mr. Augustus Thomas has intro-

duced him into "De Lancey," the new play that opened the Empire Theater, and he wrote the part around Mr. Drew's peculiar figure. It proved to be a trivial affair, by no means up to the Thomas standard, but it gave Mr. Drew a chance to utter many "flip" speeches, and to pose as the mature lover. A lover with a divorced wife in the background is certainly new to the stage, though its desirability is less certain.

We are not quite accustomed to the idea—mind, I say *not quite*—that a stage hero may be allowed to love twice. We have been too used to the notion of the "one great love" that ends happily with marriage bells. However, that, of course, is a slavishly European trend. Here the marriage bell, in real life, dingles at all times and for all people, and its music does not signify the end of life's romance any more surely than it marks the beginning of several of 'em. Mr. Thomas was not at all wrong in giving us a divorced hero, in a tentative way. We ought to be able to stand him. Perhaps we shall succeed in doing so in time. Just at present, he is a bit "incongruous."

As for the heroine in "De Lancey," she began to love the variegated *James* while his first wife was still *Mrs. De Lancey*. She says that he made her love him. This is also real life, as opposed to the traditional stage brand. Owing to our education, however, we felt very little interest in *Jacqueline Marple*, and our sympathies went out to the first *Mrs. De Lancey*, whom we never saw, but who, for some reason or other, Mr. Thomas implied that the hero had never really loved. Why shouldn't he have "really loved" her? What is the use of being just halfway up-to-date? If we are offered a divorced hero, we prefer to believe that he can and will love several times. At the close of "De Lancey," moreover, there was the sweet expectation that when the hero had got tired of "really loving" his *Jacqueline*, there would be a romantic sequel to the piece, in the shape of another beautiful love story from Mr. Thomas' pen.

The idealization of divorce opens the

way to endless possibilities. If "De Lancey" were to meet with much success—which is not at all likely, for it is anemic to the point of exhaustion—there would be nothing to prevent Mr. Thomas from continuing to present his hero in all his kaleidoscopic divorces. Personally, of course, I am much too old-fashioned to believe that such a hero has even a fighting chance with the future, but Thomas is one of the few deservedly popular American playwrights, and there is no knowing what he will do in his frenzied efforts to weave American life into stage romance.

Mr. Drew himself was the usual Mr. Drew. That he was able to make capital of the silly scene in which *De Lancey* fell from his horse and was injured—a Laura Jean Libbey way of eliciting popular sympathy—was much to his credit. He acted this dish-water episode with fine discretion. In fact, he was discreet throughout. He was at least a head and shoulders above his poor little play, of which—when all was said and done—one wondered what the motive really was. I am not a stickler for motive, as I love *not* thinking, and motive always makes one think, but one wants just enough of it to satisfy one's conscience.

Mr. Drew's leading lady, Miss Margaret Dale, of whom great things were confidently expected in the dim past, has not materialized. She is a mass of difficult affectations, both of manner and of speech, and Mr. Drew's personal ease and simplicity seemed to exaggerate them. Leading ladies certainly seem to be at a premium. They are gradually disappearing from our midst, either "starring" or getting old. The demand is greater than the supply. There was one charming young woman in "De Lancey" whom I do not recall having seen before. I refer to Miss Doris Keene, whose ingenuous manner, free from conventional stage tricks, seemed to speak of her novitiate. I always fear writing pleasant comments about such young women, not because I don't enjoy meting out praise when it is justly accruing, but because the effect of these

remarks is so often disastrous. It is, of course, human nature for the stage artist to read and feel thankful for favorable criticism—and, taken homeopathically, there is nothing more beneficial—but it frequently ends honest endeavor, and appears to indicate that the struggler has "got there."

On the stage, unfortunately, there is no well-defined goal. A success one season is often followed by a failure the next. The young artist treasuring up approving words cannot understand why the next dose is bitter and nauseous. An unhappy frame of mind occurs; there is a sense of being misunderstood, and the indiscriminate critic has much to answer for. My pleasure is to pick out unobtrusive members of a cast, who have done good work, and to tell them so. Sycophants will always be found willing to ladle out soupy enthusiasm for the star. Just the same, however, I hate to believe that kind words may lead to disaster, and if I had not seen instances of it, I should decline to do so.

Bernard Shaw has appeared again, and at the very start of the season, too. His "trick" has succeeded beyond all peradventure of doubt, and that Mr. Shaw worked assiduously at this "trick" for years before he caught the public ear, he himself would be the last to deny. His trick was that of the professional *salimbanque*. He made people talk, stare, gasp. He propounded droll propositions. He criticised Shakespeare—unfavorably. He gave vent to startling iconoclasm. He was dramatic critic for the *Saturday Review*, and was the one piquant feature in an old-fashioned, heavy and disgruntled sheet. He bided his opportunity, and it came. He railed against the theater, and began to write for it.

"The theater struck me down like a weakling," says Mr. Shaw, in the preface to his "Three Plays for Puritans." "I sank under it, like a baby fed on starch. My very bones began to perish, so that I had to get them planed and gouged by accomplished surgeons. I fell from heights and broke my limbs in pieces. The doctors said: 'This man

has not eaten meat for twenty years—he must eat it or die.’ I said: ‘This man has been going to the London theaters for three years, and the soul of him has become inane, and is feeding unnaturally on his body.’ And I was right.”

Bernard Shaw made his own vogue, and a man who can do that is a great man. Any pigmy can succeed if he be diligently boomed by willing friends, just as any actor can be “made” if he be persistently advertised and cunningly managed by any acute impresario. But the writer or actor who can force unwilling folks to take him up, accept him at his own valuation, and give him attention, is the writer or actor who has the wherewithal. Bernard Shaw circumscribed himself. This country, which loves circuses, took him up. His vogue really began with the production of “Candida” in little old New York City.

This season began with Bernard Shaw in a revival of “You Never Can Tell,” at the Garrick, and a brand-new production of a later work, “Man and Superman,” at the Hudson Theater. London got ahead of New York in the case of “Man and Superman,” for I just escaped seeing it at the Court Theater, in the English metropolis, where it was ending its run as I arrived.

“Man and Superman” is a fine instance of the virulence of the Shaw boom, though I should not be a bit surprised if it marked its decline. It is the least actable of the Shaw plays that we have seen, and it is, to my mind, preferable in book covers. Not that I do not hail its production. It is, with all its unactability, the most interesting offering of the new season, but that means little, for—to quote Mr. Shaw himself—“Karl Marx said of Stuart Mill that his eminence was due to the flatness of the surrounding country.” In this case the surrounding country is scarcely mountainous.

John Tanner, the central figure of “Man and Superman,” is but a mouth-piece for this clever writer’s paradoxes. He is scarcely a human being, and his vitality is very low. He is amusing, and cynical, and whimsical, and topsy-

turvy, and philosophic, and willful, and revolutionary. You listen to his incessant humors in much the same mind that you witness a display of rockets at Coney Island—perhaps a trifle more intellectually. There is, however, less facility and spontaneity in the characters of “Man and Superman” than you find in “Candida” or “You Never Can Tell.”

The “love” episode is, of course, audaciously entertaining, because Shaw sets forth the gorgeously anti-poetic idea that in “affairs of the heart,” so-called, man is the pursued and woman the pursuer; that it is she who in furtherance of her mission in life, and in obedience to her instinct, hunts him down and corners him, willy-nilly. *Ann Whitefield* is a very exhilarating creature, thoroughly Bernard Shaw, and her presence in the play extremely novel. Everything is discussed in “Man and Superman,” from sexual to social problems. The audience gasped a little at the *Violet Robinson* business, when *Mr. Tanner* elected to defend the girl who had “gone astray,” and to uphold a course that we note very charily in the newspapers, and with much circumlocution.

Just as the audience had begun to look askance and the young girls were remarking that “This is no place for us,” Mr. Shaw turned the tables. *Violet Robinson* produced a wedding ring, and the situation righted itself with a jerk that gave one a shock. “Man and Superman” is a series of shocks. We are told that all real humor proceeds from a shock. But in its purest form the shock is imperceptible. Bernard Shaw shakes up the nervous system a bit. He massages all the wrinkles out of all the traditions.

I enjoyed “Man and Superman” hugely, although I realized that it was Shaw at his limit, as far as the stage went, and that, as a playwright, it might mark his decline. However, it is quite on the cards that we shall see “Mrs. Warren’s Profession,” and then shan’t we have something to say? The amount of talk that “Mrs. Warren’s Profession” will let loose is almost unthinkable at this sedate moment.

It was Mr. Robert Loraine who secured and produced "Man and Superman." Bernard Shaw, who knows a thing or two, and who, although a professional socialist, is, very presumably, not a bad man of business, must have realized that it was no mere conscienceless manager who started his vogue in this country; that, in effect, it was a young actor, Mr. Arnold Daly. So he gave "Man and Superman" to another young actor, thereby manifesting his own absolute level-headedness. It is easy to imagine what might have happened to this latest piece if it had been pitchforked into the managerial caldron.

Robert Loraine played *John Tanner* very well indeed. He is an earnest young man, with a nice diction and a good stage presence. He appeared to understand the significance of the character, if it had any, and he did the best he could for it. The absurd chauffeur—in the book the character was immensely humorous; on the stage, it was ridiculous—fell to the lot of Edward Abeles, who completely spoiled it. This impersonation would have given Mr. Shaw a severe pain. Shaw is a maniac on the subject of dialect, and takes immense trouble to instill its pronunciation into the minds of his readers. Mr. Abeles spoke cockney jargon that had never been nearer cockneydom than lower Broadway, and *Straker* was lost.

Miss Fay Davis also failed to give the proper twist to *Ann Whitefield*. It was a bit out of her "schoolmarm" line, and she was, moreover, physically incapacitated from doing justice to the rôle. Miss Clara Bloodgood was *Violet Robinson* quite effectively, proving once more that if she be not strong enough to "star," she is at least an excellent interpreter of character "bits," and a woman of vivid intelligence. Louis Massen, as *Roebuck Ramsden*, was very bad indeed, and the *Octavius Robinson* of Alfred Hickman was colorless.

It is really quite overwhelmingly ludicrous to watch the attitude of a New York audience at a Shaw play, now that Shaw has been proclaimed universally worthy. You can see the people groveling for the much-advertised brilliancy.

You realize the fact that the audience is clamoring and even struggling to like him, because it has been declared that he is intellectual, and that the vulgar herd cannot appreciate his quality. Half of the amusement at the production of "Man and Superman" was contributed by this attitude. And to listen to the comments in the lobby was sheer bliss! While the long-haired patrons of the Ibsen drama failed to "get together," there was a short-haired, stocky, blandly serious collection of enthusiasts that was simply—may I say pie?—for the student of human nature.

Poor Mr. "Nat" Goodwin—time was when the "Nat" needed no quotation marks!—fell with a dull and sickening thud, at the Lyceum Theater, with the production of "Beauty and the Barge," by W. W. Jacobs and Louis N. Parker, of London. It was the first appearance behind the footlights of Mr. W. W. Jacobs, whose "Many Cargoes" have found at least one reader for each cargo. If he be wise, it will be his last appearance, as far as New York is concerned.

"Beauty and the Barge," as judged by the spectator of normal lucidity, was simply a boisterous grouping of inane nautical types, who mistook rumpus for drama—a mistake that has been known to occur on other occasions. Not a suspicion of humor lurked in this dramatization of an acknowledged humorist. It was sad and pitiful. The "full-length portrait" of *Captain James Barley*, of the *Heart in Hand*, may possibly have materialized, for Mr. Goodwin himself played the part, and played it most legitimately, but the "monkeyshines" that surrounded him, and the plotless, pointless, reasonless antics of the other types, were utterly unendurable. The slight semblance of an impossible story in the flight of *Ethel Smedley* on the captain's barge proved to be inadequate. The "barge" foundered early in the game, and the "beauty" can scarcely be said to have survived.

That the play ran for a long time in London, where it was produced by Mr. Cyril Maude, seems quite extraordinary. That *Captain Barley* had a better in-

terpretation by Mr. Maude than by Mr. Goodwin, is not at all likely. It is hard to account for the rumor of this piece's London success, and may I, in my deep-rooted scepticism, say that I cannot believe in the truth of the rumor, even admitting, what the records show, that "Beauty and the Barge" ran for a protracted period? May it not be that in London, as in New York, runs are occasionally forced, for the sake of the expectant and unbiased "road"? For the play had no trace of coherence, no plausibility, no human interest, no wit, no situations. There was a good deal, and to spare, of vinous racket and of seafaring obstreperousness, but as a play it was all simply iniquitously dull and unbearable.

It was a pity. We were just about ripe for a good siege of Mr. N. C. Goodwin. We had waited patiently for him. We had watched him shake the Shakespearian bee from his bonnet, after we had delicately hinted to him that he had read no new readings into *Shylock*. We had hoped for a good time to come—but it has not yet come. The large audience did all that was possible to encourage him, and called for him at the end of the acts, just as though he had achieved a notable success. The fact remained that the "barge" was miserably shipwrecked. The list of casualties was a long one, and included Katherine Florence, George Sumner, Frank Goldsmith, George Miller, Ida Goldsmith, Neil O'Brien and Davenport Seymour.

"The Prince Chap," by Edward Peble, at the Madison Square Theater, was set down immediately as "pretty." And so it was—appallingly pretty, painfully pretty, monotonously pretty. It introduced us to an artist who adopted the girl child of his "model," and a few minutes later—when the model had expired, with much melodrama, on a comfortable sofa by a singularly red fire—undressed her on the stage, put her to bed, listened to her while she said "Now I lay me," and then, when she reached eighteen years of age, in Act III., fell in love with her. It was the sort of prettiness that appealed to me as merely

mawkish. It is not quite as easy to be intelligently "pretty" as might be imagined. The lispng child fetich, which has done duty for so long, has no intrinsic prettiness. Nothing has that is primitively obvious.

It is quite safe to say that Mr. Theodore Kremer, whose ludicrous melodramas delight the extreme east and west sides, has managed to be quite as "pretty" as Mr. Peble, at the Madison Square. For he has used the lispng child with the selfsame effect. Any playwright who nowadays attempts to enlist the sympathies of the theatergoers by means of the nightgowned youngster saying its prayers, must not feel unduly slighted if cultured playgoers accuse him of substituting bathos for pathos. In "The Prince Chap" bathos struggled incessantly with pathos, and one dash of the former ruins the latter. Pathos, to ring true, must be unassailable by the sense of humor.

However, it was wholesome, which may be said of some drama and of all porridge. It had much pure sentiment, and no contrasts. It was sickly as syrup unadulterated, and it seemed a bit out of place in the sophisticated vicinity of Broadway. Cyril Scott, of musical comedy memories, played *William Peyton*, the artist, very ardently and nervously. He had been intrusted with a "star" rôle, and realization of that fact made him overanxious. Three feminine players interpreted little *Claudia* in the various stages of her studio career, and this was the only apparent novelty that "The Prince Chap" had to offer. One actress often attempts three parts, but three players are rarely assigned to one, in these commercial days of economical endeavor. Miss Helen Pullman, a charming tot, played *Claudia* when she was five; Edith Speare, another admirable child actress, was made to represent the age of eight; to Miss Grayce Scott fell the task of impersonating the maiden at the more usual age of eighteen. It was quite a relief that *Claudia* stopped there. What actress could have played her when she was forty, and what audience could have been found to watch her?

FOR BOOK LOVERS



Archibald Lowery Sessions

Significance of the "Man Himself" in art. Influence of the idea in literature, and its need in contemporary fiction. Is it being displaced by tools and material? Books of the month. "Sandy," by Alice Hegan Rice, "The Memoirs of an American Citizen," by Robert Herrick, "The Game," by Jack London, "The Fool Errant," by Maurice Hewlett. The twenty-five best selling books



IN a recent book, remarkable for its sound appreciation of some of the subtler manifestations of the mind which so often elude most of us, the author lays great stress upon the proposition that "in modern art, what we have to reckon with is the Man Himself." It is, in fact, the keynote of the story, the motive which gives it its extraordinary vitality; it represents the irrepressible conflict inaugurated and maintained by nature between individuality and environment, between genius and conventionality.

It suggests Napoleon's famous dictum that in war "men are nothing; a Man is everything," which may be applied as strictly to art in general as to the art of war in particular.

If any exception is to be taken to the author's statement, which, though it is put into the mouth of one of her characters, may at the same time be accepted as her own view, it is that it should not have been so qualified. So far as its fundamental principles are concerned, modern art differs in no respect from that of classical or mediæval times; such differences as exist are differences in the point of view. While it may very well be that, because our own personal interests are involved, contemporary art assumes an atmosphere of greater importance to us, yet, after all, the meth-

ods of applying valuations are the same. Nevertheless, so far as the author's statement goes, it is vitally true; indeed, its truth is so profound that is likely to be comprehended by but few.

So far as literary estimates are concerned, it is one of the rarest things in the world either to read or to hear the question "What of the Man Himself?" There are all sorts of views of his dexterity and cultivation and manners, but never an opinion as to how much or how little of himself he has put into his work. There is endless sophisticated talk of schools of fiction, construction, style, local color and technique, as though these things were of any value except as the tools and material and deftness with which the work is done. One authority has been heard to declare that construction is to be considered above and beyond everything else in the writing of fiction, and another equally good authority takes special delight in discovering and naming a new school or type, and their efforts only add to the fog of formalism, which obscures the aim and dampens the ardor of individuality.

The material and tools that a man uses are of the smallest importance if he only has insight and patience enough to put himself into his work. "He that writes to himself writes to an eternal public," and when he has succeeded in establishing this as a habit, he will find that those things that he needs, with

which his work must be done, will come readily enough to his hand without his being obliged to go abroad for them.



"Sandy," by Alice Hegan Rice, Century Company, is a breezy, sensible little story of a Scotch-Irish stowaway and his fortunes, ending up with a good love story, and bringing out the hero in an attractive manliness which conquers obstacles and triumphs over misfortune. There is plenty of shrewd humor, adventure, good character painting and attractive description. We are inclined to pronounce this the author's very best work, better even than "Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch," though all lovers of the earlier story may not agree with us. She seems to have gained in force and dignity, rather a rare happening when a very popular book is followed rapidly by others. "Sandy" will make its way among all sorts of readers.



In "Claims and Counterclaims," Doubleday, Page & Co., Maude Wilder Goodwin may disappoint some readers who looked upon her interesting "Four Roads to Paradise" as a promise of things greater. This book is not so artistic as its predecessor, although it can by no means be called dull. But the problem novel is only at its best when the problem itself appeals to a general interest. In this case it is purely a personal one, not within the pale of average experience. Anthony Dilke's life has been saved by Eustice Brandyce, for whom he has neither liking nor respect. An uncomfortable sense of obligation possesses him during several years of separation, and he confides this feeling to his friend Newbold, an artist. Dilke becomes a physician, settles in the city, and takes somewhat desperate means to gain a practice, resulting in his introduction to Joyce Eldridge and her hypochondriac father. He is installed as family medical adviser and travels with father and daughter abroad. Brandyce appears later, claims and follows up a previous acquaintance with Joyce, and here the "problem" comes to

the fore in its due proportion, as Dilke perceives that his duty is to sacrifice as much as possible to his rescuer of former days. Of course the matter is cleared up later by familiar methods. The author is very good at making her characters talk well, and one finds in them fairly clever men and women of the world, mostly of ordinary types, among which Madame Du Pont is particularly well done. We put the book down with the conviction that Mrs. Goodwin has it in her to write a still better one some day.



Mr. Brudno has followed his book, "The Fugitive," with another absorbingly dramatic story, "The Little Conscript," Doubleday, Page & Co., taking up the same theme as in the former book—the persecutions of the Jews in Russia. The Little Conscript is kidnapped as a dreamy, almost fanatic boy student in the synagogue of a Lithuanian hamlet, during the reign of Nicholas I., for compulsory service in the army, under a law forcing each Jewish community to furnish a certain number of recruits. The author's fair representation of Jew nature, with all its sides, good and bad, strikes one forcibly throughout, and makes every picture more thrilling and more horrible in its vivid portrayal of the effects of Russian oppression upon the wretched Hebrew people. No persecution is left untried upon the poor young hero, Yosselle, who clings blindly to his Jewish faith in the grip of his inquisitors, priests of the Eastern church and so-called disciples of Christ. Placed at last under the care of a rough Russian peasant, to be reared for army service, he grows up with nature as his solace—Christianity and the New Testament as a strange contradictory problem, a Gentile girl as his chief human companion. Fine descriptions brighten up the plot from time to time and intensify its charm. Pavel, as he has been renamed under compulsory Christian baptism, enters the army, and the horrors of Russian militarism now stand out in all their blackness. Censorship, depor-

tation, revolution, the crimes of officials and their terroristic consequences, grow familiar things before our eyes as the story runs its course, and the thrilling finale is in keeping with the rest.



As Mr. Algernon Charles Swinburne's reputation as a poet rests on most unchangeable foundations, it is well, perhaps, that his novel, "Love's Cross Currents," Harpers, was not published at the period when it is supposed to have been written. This "buried bantling of his literary youth," as the author himself styles it, in his admirable preface, takes shape in a correspondence carried on by a worldly and selfish old woman with a number of young relatives, who manage to inform her, without any stimulus of respect or affection, all about their affairs of the heart and the consequences thereof; receiving in return for this "giving away" of their sensation a good deal of vague advice, some of it cleverly and some tiresomely expressed. One expects great things, which somehow do not develop. Even the sensations of the book, murder and adultery, are left to be disentangled from such a web of suggestion as to be almost too fatiguing for any reward of excitement when really decided upon by the guesser. The "Englishwoman's Love Letters," sentimental though they were, gave one more zest for the game of conjecture. But here and there come clever bits as sops to one's patience, while a flavor of English good breeding pervades the book comfortably.



"A Fool for Love," by Francis Lynde, is another in the series of Pocket Books published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company. Like Mr. Lynde's earlier book, "The Grafters," it is a railroad story, but less elaborately worked up. It has fully as much material for a plot as the previous story, and no less interest than that absorbing tale, and it seems a pity that Mr. Lynde could not have expanded it to the dimensions of a good-sized novel.

It is the story of the rivalry of two

Western railroads over the construction of a piece of track to complete connections very necessary to one of the companies, to the detriment, more or less, of the other. The struggle to finish the work in the face of all sorts of obstacles, natural and manufactured, is carried on by the hero. His success is jeopardized by his infatuation for the daughter of the president of the rival road, but he is finally saved from defeat partly through the instrumentality of the heroine.

It is full of action and interesting episode, that of the runaway car being especially exciting, and one which could well have been described at greater length with advantage to the story.



It cannot truthfully be said that Robert Herrick has improved upon "The Common Lot" in his new book, "The Memoirs of an American Citizen," published by Macmillan. In the first place, the theme is not worthy of Mr. Herrick's talents, for it offers no imaginative possibilities either for the author or the reader. It is one with which the American public is thoroughly familiar, one which has been repeated again and again in the industrial history of the country.

Van Harrington's rise—or fall, according to the reader's preference—from the condition of a penniless and friendless boy to a position of wealth and power, by means repugnant to a reasonable sense of honor, is one to which we are all well seasoned. To depict such a career, the camera is as serviceable as the brush. Therefore, those who find pleasure or entertainment in going over a list of familiar facts will find this story to be one not entirely without interest.

The author's manner of handling his subject is not the one we should be led to expect from a writer of Mr. Herrick's tastes and training, for he has contented himself with a mere reproduction of such actual conditions as he thinks he finds, without attempting to deduce any conclusions from them. Besides this, he has left it to be inferred

that Van Harrington represents, with all his rascalities, the sum total of what American citizenship is, or would like to be, if it could.

The characters, except Van Harrington's brother, Will, and his wife, are an unpleasant lot, destitute, mostly, of human feeling or generous impulse.



Jack London can be depended upon never to disappoint his admirers—at least, so far as the selection of a theme is concerned. He has boldly appropriated for his stories the gross animalism that human nature sometimes exhibits, and has apparently made it his specialty. There was enough of it in all conscience in "The Sea Wolf," though he undertook to temper the savagery of Wolf Larsen by depicting him also as a man of some intellectual ambition.

There is no qualification of the sort, however, in the new story, "The Game," Macmillan. It is a frankly brutal prize-fighting story, in which only an insignificant appeal is made to the finer human impulses. The hero and heroine are only commonplace people, a man and woman of the masses, destitute of either refinement or any of the substitutes for it, although the fact that they do not use the jargon of their class tends to give a contrary impression.

Aside from this, it must be said that "The Game" is pretty nearly the best work Mr. London has done. Technically, it leaves very little to be desired, for it betrays a thorough mastery of the theme, and a logical and consistent development of it, from introduction to climax.



Mr. Robert W. Chambers' intentions were unquestionably good when he set himself to the task of writing "Iole," recently published by D. Appleton & Co., and, equally without question, something like what he evidently had in mind in writing it is much needed. But one cannot help feeling that the subject requires a more trenchant pen, a clearer grasp, a keener discrimination as to fundamentals, and a more refined humor

than Mr. Chambers has made use of here.

The story is an attempt to satirize twentieth century attitudinizing with respect to questions of art. There is enough material in all conscience to give point to satirical composition on this subject, but, to be effective, it must be handled with more regard for the rules of the game than this story shows.

The character of the poet Guilford gives the impression of rather hasty and careless workmanship, and as he really is the central figure, the point of the whole story in consequence suffers. His daughters, as accessories to the main idea of the satire, are not clear-cut characters, as they should be for the purpose.

The story might just as well have been called "Aphrodite" or "Vanessa" as "Iole."



"The Summit House Mystery," by L. Dougall, Funk & Wagnalls, is a curious story, which, in a manner wholly unlooked for, grows more absorbing as the narrative progresses.

The scene is laid in Georgia, but, unfortunately for first impressions, the author betrays an obvious unfamiliarity with the people of the region, including the negroes and the class of Southern planters who outlived the Civil War. This defect makes it difficult, for a time, for the reader to be amicably disposed toward the Northern women who, after the purchase of an old Southern homestead, have settled down in this remote place.

Gradually, however, as the plot is unfolded, there is discovered a genuine murder mystery, artistically concealed up to that point. The climax is unexpected, and the reader is amply repaid for the suspense to which he is subjected.



Maurice Hewlett's "The Fool Errant," Macmillan, is a story of eighteenth century Italy with an English hero, and is likely to be more widely read than "The Queen's Quair," not so much, perhaps, because of its intrinsic

merits or of its interest as because there is somewhat less of the author's peculiar artificiality of style.

The story is an account of the adventures of Francis Strelley, an English youth who, in 1721, is sent to Padua to study law under Dr. Porfirio Lanfranchi, of the University of Padua. He falls in love with the wife of his preceptor, a not unnatural consequence, if the lady is adequately described. He was not a young man of much reserve, however, for he most quixotically confesses his passion, not to her, but to her husband, who promptly shows her the door.

Strelley's real adventures begin with this episode, for, after his ladylove has been set adrift by her outraged husband, he undertakes the mission of seeking her out and righting the wrong he is convinced that he has done her, in order to restore her to her home and her rights as a wife.

He starts upon his pilgrimage as a nameless and penniless wanderer through the chaos of eighteenth century Italy, and finally, by means of his association with another woman, raised by his devotion from degradation to respectability, realizes that his quest is unworthy of him.

"The Mysterious Disappearance" is one of the best all-round detective stories that have appeared for many days. It is the work of an author who writes under the *nom de plume*, it is understood, of Gordon Holmes, and is published by E. J. Clode.

It has an extremely clever plot, well conceived and well developed. It is entirely free from the extravagances of ordinary criminal stories, except in the matter of one gambling episode at Monte Carlo, which, however, in no way affects the flow of the narrative. It is manifestly the work of an educated man of the world.

Its hero is a lawyer, who produces effects without the accompaniment of a brass band. He lacks the red fire of Sherlock Holmes and the musk and mandolin of Raffles. All the people in

the story are real men and women. The servants are servants, the police are policemen, the ladies and gentlemen are well-bred, the atmosphere is breathable.

The author leads all his rivals as a man of affairs, except, perhaps, Conan Doyle; and while he doubtless lacks Doyle's brilliancy, he makes up for it in a measure by his realization of his own limitations, and does not try to do too much.



The Twenty-five Best Selling Books of the Month.

- "The Divine Fire," May Sinclair, Henry Holt & Co.
- "The Game," Jack London, Macmillan Co.
- "Sandy," Alice Hegan Rice, Century Co.
- "The Man on the Box," Harold MacGrath, Bobbs-Merrill Co.
- "Terence O'Rourke," Louis Joseph Vance, A. Wessels Co.
- "Pam," Bettina von Hutten, Dodd, Mead & Co.
- "The Image in the Sand," E. F. Benson, J. B. Lippincott Co.
- "The Breath of the Gods," Sidney McCall, Little, Brown & Co.
- "At the Sign of the Fox," by the author of "The Garden of a Commuter's Wife," Macmillan Co.
- "The Man of the Hour," Octave Thanet, Bobbs-Merrill Co.
- "Constance Trescott," S. Weir Mitchell, Century Co.
- "Rose o' the River," Kate Douglas Wiggin, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.
- "The Princess Passes," C. N. and A. M. Williamson, Henry Holt & Co.
- "The Missourian," Eugene P. Lyle, Doubleday, Page & Co.
- "The Master Mummer," E. Phillips Oppenheim, Little, Brown & Co.
- "Mrs. Jim and Mrs. Jimmie," Stephen Conrad, L. C. Page & Co.
- "Nancy Stair," Eleanor McCartney Lane, D. Appleton & Co.
- "The Rose of the World," Agnes and Egerton Castle, F. A. Stokes & Co.
- "The Sunset Trail," Alfred Henry Lewis, A. S. Barnes & Co.
- "A Servant of the Public," Anthony Hope, F. A. Stokes & Co.
- "My Friend the Chauffeur," C. N. and A. M. Williamson, McClure, Phillips & Co.
- "The Gambler," Katherine C. Thurston, Harper Bros.
- "Nedra," George Barr McCutcheon, Dodd, Mead & Co.
- "The Boss of Little Arcady," Harry Leon Wilson, Lee & Shepard.
- "The Sunny Side of the Street," Marshall P. Wilder, Funk & Wagnalls.

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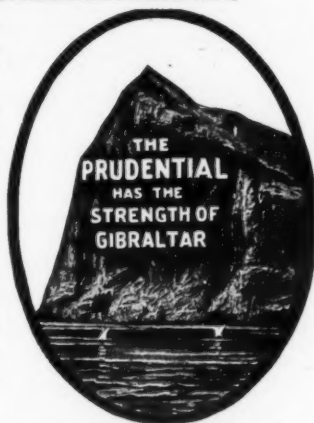
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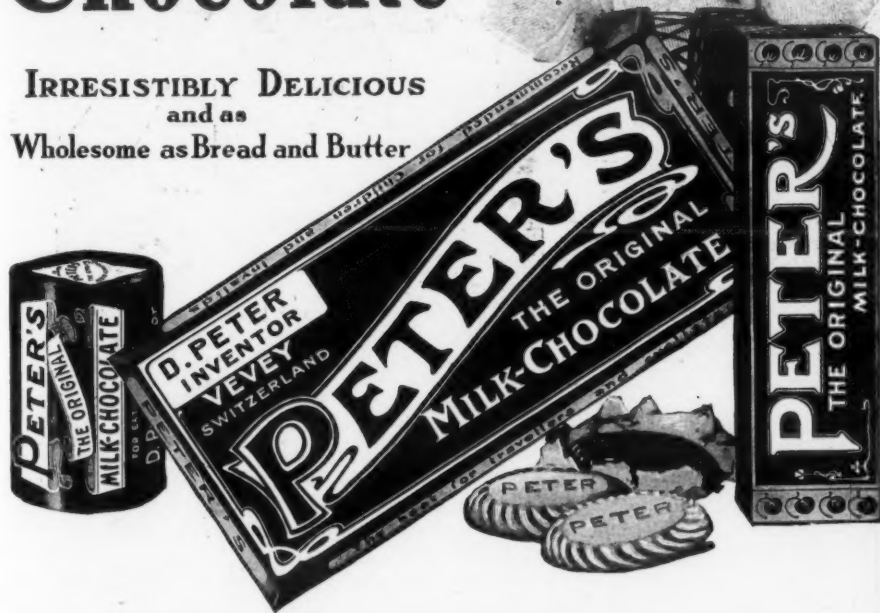
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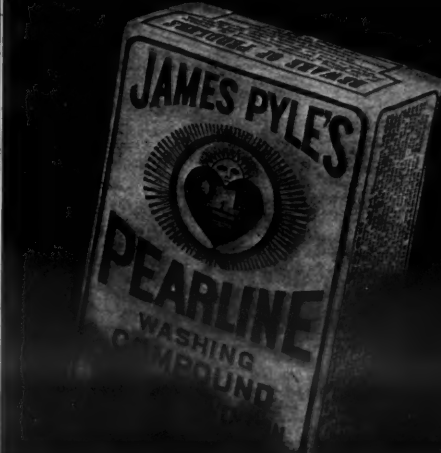


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Souss's Band	
31447 "Orpheus in Hades"	Offenbach
31448 "Reminiscences of Tosti"	Godfrey
31449 "Vienna Bon Bons Waltz" (Weiser Bon Bons)	Strauss
31450 "Blue Danube Waltz"	Strauss
31451 "Priest's War March"—Athalie	Mendelssohn
31452 "Kuy Blas Overture"	Mendelssohn
31453 "Queen of Sheba March"	Gounod
31454 "Breeze of the Night Waltz" (Brise des Nuits)	Lamothé
Arthur Pryor's Band	
4477 "Call of the Wild March"	Losey
Life Guards Military Band	
61152 "Departure of a Man of War"	Russell Hunting
Pryor's Orchestra	
4476 "Song of the Gondolier"	Mazzacabé
Mandolin Solo by Valentine Abt (orch. acc.)	
4495 "Angel's Serenade"	Braga
Tenor Solo by Harry Macdonough (orch. acc.)	
4499 "Honeycomb Hall"	Bratton
4500 "In Dear Old Georgia"	Williams and Van Alstyne
Contralto Solo by Miss Corinne Morgan (orch. acc.)	
4493 "Lullaby from Erin"	Jacobowski
Tenor Solo by Byron G. Harlan (orch. acc.)	
4494 "The Message of the Old Church Bell"	Leighton
Bass Solo by Frank C. Stanley (orch. acc.)	
4497 "The Skippers of St. Ives"	Roeckel
Songs by Billy Murray (orch. acc.)	
4487 "I've Sweethearts in Every Port"	Keith
4486 Parody on "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree"	Keith
4488 "The Whole Damn Family"	Von Tilzer

"Victor Dog
on every
Record."



4498 "Dat Ain't Nothin' but Talk"	Smith
4485 "The Lamb is the Light Thro'ed"	Stebbins
By Frank C. Stanley	
4479 "Near the Cross"	Doane
4480 "He Leadeth Me"	Bradbury
By Macdonough and Stanley	
4481 "Let the Lower Lights be Burning"	Bliss
Duets by Collins and Harlan (orch. acc.)	
4484 "Central, Give Me Back My Dime"	Howard
4485 "Hey, Mr. Joshua"	Kentle
Vandeville Specialty by Spencer and Jones (orch. acc.)	
4491 "Every Little Bit Helps"	
Baritone Solos in Spanish by Emilio de Gogorza (orch. acc.)	
4496 "Jose Maria"	Hernandez
4497 "Los dos Princesas" (Son los bailes de Mascara)	Caballero
4498 "El Capitan de Lanceros" (Sevillana)	Hernandez
Soprano Solos by Mme. A. Michailowa	
61139 "Lullaby—Jocelyn" (vi lin obligato)	Gofard
61140 "Oh, Sing to Me"	Duski
61141 "Dearest Name" (Caro Nome), Rigoleto	Verril
61144 "Serenade" (flute obligato)	Gounod
Duets by Mmes. Michailowa and Tugarnoff	
61142 "Russian Folk Song"	Dorogomyski
61143 "The Sea Gull's Cry"	Grodski
Tenor Solo in Italian by Aristide Rota (chorus and mandolin orch.)	
61149 "Funfcolli Funfcola" (Canzone Napoletana)	Denza
Tenor Solo in German by Erik Schmedes	
(k. k. Kammeranger with chorus)	
61150 "Arie des Dalibor aus 'Dalibor'"	
Baritone Solo in German by Robert Leonhardt (orch. acc.)	
61151 "Die Musik kommt" (The Music Comes!)	
Soprano Solo in German by Gertrude Runge (orch. acc.)	
71007 "Arie der Titania aus Mignon" (Titania's Song from Mignon) Thomas	
Sea Chanties sung by the Minster Singers	
61145 Sea Chanties No. 1	61147 Sea Chanties Nos. 4 and 5
(1) "The Cap-tan Bar"	(4) "Whiskey Johnny"
61146 Sea Chanties Nos. 2 and 3	(5) "Shenandoah"
(2) "Blow My Bully Boys"	61148 Sea Chanties Nos. 6 and 7
(3) "Sally Brown"	(6) "Rio Grande"
	(7) "Blow the Man Down"

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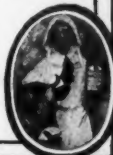
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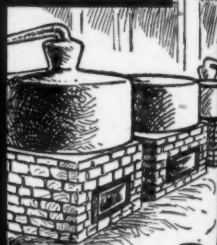


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When you have tested it 7 days, if you find it the finest and easiest shaving razor you ever used, keep it.

Then the razor must pay for itself—that's my new plan.

If the razor don't do all I say, then send it back at my expense and you're out nothing for you've paid me nothing and you owe me nothing.

You see the average man should be shaved at least three times a week—at 15c a shave that's 45c a week for shaving.

So, if you decide to keep the razor, all I ask you to pay me is what you'd pay the barber—45c a week.

Just send me at the end of each week what you'd have paid him for a few weeks until the razor is paid for.

That way I made the barber buy you the razor.

At that, my razor doesn't take any more money to pay for itself than you would have to pay out of your own pocket for an ordinary razor.

And I go even farther.

I say to you, if after the 7 days free trial you do decide to keep the razor and let it pay for itself—then I will see to it that you have no further razor expense for life.

Because I agree to keep your blades sharp forever—free.

With any other safety razor you are always paying out money because you must keep on paying for new blades or resharpening as long as you live.

But the Sterling won't cost you a cent to keep sharp because—

All you do is, send me 12 dull blades, at any time, with 10 cents to cover postage. And I return them to you perfectly sharp free of charge.

That's really "no honing and no stropping."

Did you ever hear of anything as clever as this in the razor line?

It's this way—the reason I can make this offer is because there's no razor in the world compared to mine.

My steel is hardened by the Sherman process—my own invention. All other razor steel is "water dipped" to harden—that is they cool the hot steel by dipping it in cold water.

This means cracked and blistered steel—blistered so fine the naked eye can't tell it—resulting in an uneven tempered edge—sharp in places and dull in places.

WILL you let me send you a razor—without a cent deposit?

Then I will keep it sharp and keen for the rest of your life free.

That's my plan—my new plan of selling razors.

No other razor maker in the world sells razors this way—because they can't—their razor won't stand it. Mine will—it's the way it's made.

Now—I offer you the only razor in the world that never takes a minute of your time to sharpen—and yet is always sharp.

I don't say "Send me the price of the razor, and if, after you have tried it, you find that it isn't all I claim, I will send your money back."

—Not me.

On a "money back" proposition you may feel that there was some chance of not getting your money back if you wanted it—I won't let you feel that way about my razor.

I know my razor will satisfy you—I show my confidence by just sending my razor to any reliable party without a penny down.

Now, simply do this—Send me

your name, occupation, home and business address—

I'll take all the risk and send, prepaid, a Sterling Safety Razor with 24 blades by express, or a Sherman Old Style Interchangeable Razor with 12 blades.

This latter is simply a regular old style with a small spring which permits taking out the dull blade and putting in a sharp one.

You see the Sterling Razor is so much better than any other razor that I can afford to send one without any payment or deposit.

When you have tested it 7 days, if you find it the finest and easiest shaving razor you ever used, keep it.

Then the razor must pay for itself—that's my new plan.

If the razor don't do all I say, then send it back at my expense and you're out nothing for you've paid me nothing and you owe me nothing.

You see the average man should be shaved at least three times a week—at 15c a shave that's 45c a week for shaving.

So, if you decide to keep the razor, all I ask you to pay me is what you'd pay the barber—45c a week.

Just send me at the end of each week what you'd have paid him for a few weeks until the razor is paid for.

That way I made the barber buy you the razor.

At that, my razor doesn't take any more money to pay for itself than you would have to pay out of your own pocket for an ordinary razor.

And I go even farther.

I say to you, if after the 7 days free trial you do decide to keep the razor and let it pay for itself—then I will see to it that you have no further razor expense for life.

Because I agree to keep your blades sharp forever—free.

With any other safety razor you are always paying out money because you must keep on paying for new blades or resharpening as long as you live.

But the Sterling won't cost you a cent to keep sharp because—

All you do is, send me 12 dull blades, at any time, with 10 cents to cover postage. And I return them to you perfectly sharp free of charge.

That's really "no honing and no stropping."

Did you ever hear of anything as clever as this in the razor line?

It's this way—the reason I can make this offer is because there's no razor in the world compared to mine.

My steel is hardened by the Sherman process—my own invention. All other razor steel is "water dipped" to harden—that is they cool the hot steel by dipping it in cold water.

This means cracked and blistered steel—blistered so fine the naked eye can't tell it—resulting in an uneven tempered edge—sharp in places and dull in places.

24 Blades



With my Sherman process I cool and harden the steel in two fluids that do away with all such dangers—so that my razor must hold an even edge.

And mine is the only razor on the market that is made of Sheffield steel—this is not a cold rolled steel.

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Then, in other razors after the first grinding the blade goes direct to the honing and then is stropped and sent out.

Not so with me. My blades go through two additional grinding processes which insures that the edge is straight.

So, because of my process and patent my blades are the best shaving blades in the world.

And because of all this I can afford—and am glad—to send you the razor free without any deposit but your name and address. You can order right from this advertisement—and you'll find the price as reasonable as the razor is good. If that isn't so send my razor back.

Now—write me today, stating whether you wish the Safety or Old Style Interchangeable, and let me send you the razor. State whether you wish to cut close or medium, and whether beard is wiry or fine. Don't send me any money—only a postal.

Remember the razor is yours for a week free—Then either keep it and let it pay for itself with the guarantee that I must keep the blades sharp forever—free—or return it to P. C. Sherman, Pres., Box 37 B, 41 Park Row, New York City.

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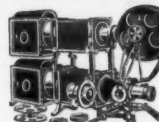
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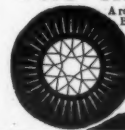


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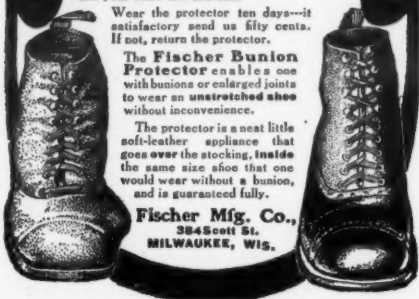
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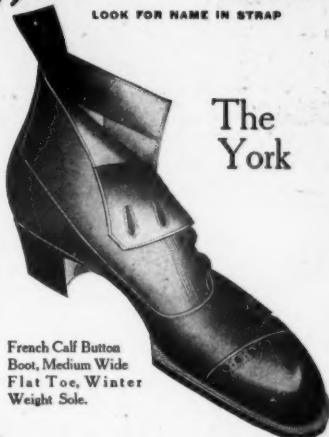
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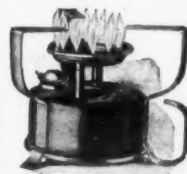
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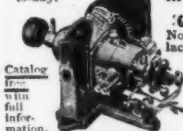
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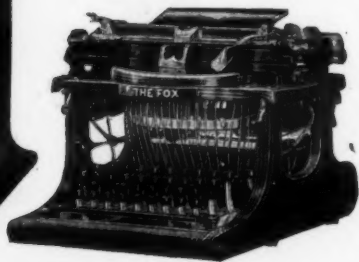
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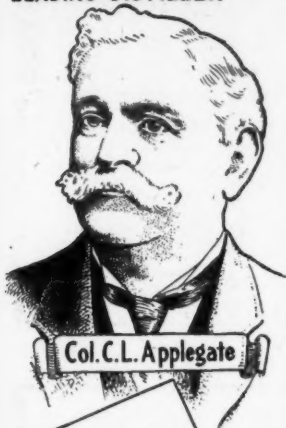
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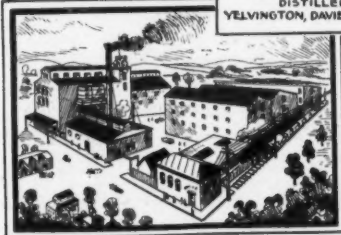
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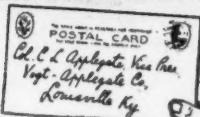


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LEXINGTON, DAVIES CO., KY

Send me
a postal card or
letter addressed like this



I will send you free my 40 page
copyrighted book

"All About the Making of Whiskey"

I will also send you my offer of an extra bottle of

"Old Beechwood" Free

with my compliments just to prove that it is the best and purest product of Kentucky or any other State or Country, no matter at what price.

MY BOOK will tell you how "Old Beechwood" is made and it further shows you how you can detect good and bad whiskey, both by taste and smell, and how to detect adulteration. The book is elaborately illustrated and serves two purposes—to tell you how "Old Beechwood" is made from A to Z, and to protect you against spurious and adulterated whiskeys. I am catering only to a high-class, discriminating trade, and I realize I must overcome the prejudice against the low price at which I am selling "Old Beechwood." Four full quarts and an extra free bottle for only \$3.00, express prepaid—but I go on record with a positive statement that "Old Beechwood" is the best and purest whiskey offered the American public. Don't forget to send for my free book, and write today.

Yours sincerely,

COL. C. L. APPLGATE, Vice-Pres.
Voigt-Applegate Co., Dept. C. Louisville, Ky.

MY RELIABILITY: Many readers will no doubt want to order four full quarts with their \$3.00. As to my financial responsibility I would refer them to the Fidelity Trust & Safety Vault Co., United States Trust Co., German Insurance Bank, all of Louisville; any citizen, banker or merchant in the State of Kentucky, where I have lived all my life.

If you are not perfectly satisfied with "Old Beechwood" you can return any unused quantity and money will be refunded.

I PREPAY THE EXPRESS

"Old Beechwood" is shipped in plain box with no marks to indicate contents, and I will include **AN EXTRA BOTTLE FREE** as well as my book. Orders from Arizona, California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington or Wyoming must be on the basis of **4 quarts for \$4.00** by Express Prepaid, or 20 quarts for \$15.00, Freight Prepaid.





**I am
John Mackintosh
the Toffee King**

**Mackintosh's
Toffee.**

A CANDY, originated in YORKSHIRE, England. Made from pure butter, cream and sugar, and other good things. The purest candy made. Not a butter-scotch, or a chewing candy—but a delicious old English sweetmeat, that everyone will enjoy. You break off a piece of it and let it dissolve in the mouth, and I tell you, you'll find it more-ish—the more you eat of it, the more you will want.

Ask your dealer to supply you. See that my name and face are on every package, or send me 10 cents for a trial package.

**JOHN MACKINTOSH,
Dept. 12, 78 Hudson St., NEW YORK**

"SIMPLICITY"

Davenport Sofa Bed



A beautiful **Davenport**, changes instantly, easily, noiselessly into a comfortable double bed. Highest measure of style and service in convertible furniture.

Made in many handsome styles, Mission, Colonial and Modern, Oak and Mahogany frames. Positively best construction. Moderate cost.

Your dealer will put it in your home at our price. No trouble, saves you risk of damage in transit.

Free Style Book "13" and name of your local dealer sent on request.

**JAMESTOWN LOUNGE COMPANY,
Sole Manufacturers. JAMESTOWN, N. Y.**

**For
Eggs**



**MEILHENNY'S
Tabasco
Sauce**

You won't tire of the breakfast egg if you dress it with Meilhenney's—the original—Tabasco Sauce. In use half a century. Promotes digestion and makes Soups, Salads, Roasts, etc., more palatable.

Free Booklet of Recipes on Request.

MEILHENNY'S TABASCO, New Iberia, La.

**Within
this jar**



there is more of the real substance of Beef—and a higher quality of Beef—than in any other Meat Extract jar of equal size.

It MUST have THIS signature

J. Liebig

In blue, or it's not genuine.

**LIEBIG COMPANY'S
Extract of Beef**



**Pabst
American
Indian
Calendar**

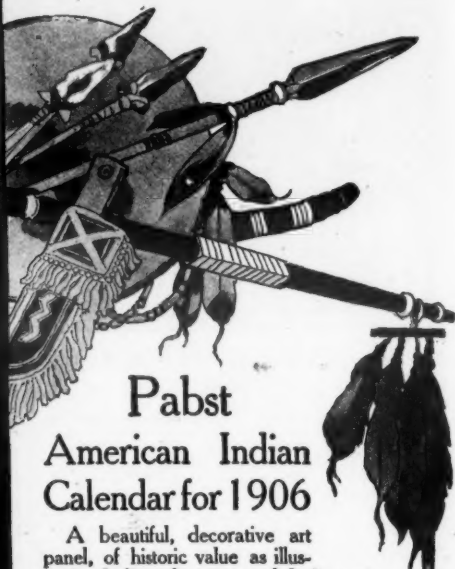
size
7x36
inches,

in 16
colors
and gold,

sent
to any
address,

for 10¢
coin or
stamps.

Copyright 1906
by C. W. Henning



**Pabst
American Indian
Calendar for 1906**

A beautiful, decorative art panel, of historic value as illustrating Indian character and Indian art, suitable for the living room, den or library. The photographic reduction here shown conveys but a faint idea of its color and beauty. Send for it, enclosing 10 cents in stamps or coin.

Pabst Extract


is pure malt—the most healthful of foods. Its benefits are two-fold—it quiets the nerves and aids digestion. It invigorates, it builds, it keeps you in condition, physically and mentally. That is why it is the "Best Tonic."

Pabst Extract is sold at all druggists for 25c.
Avoid imitations. Insist upon the original.

Pabst Extract Dept., Milwaukee, Wis.

Mention this magazine





**WHEN YOU ASK FOR
THE IMPROVED
BOSTON
GARTER**

**REFUSE ALL
SUBSTITUTES AND
INSIST ON HAVING
THE GENUINE**

The Name is
stamped on every
loop—

The Velvet Grip

**CUSHION
BUTTON
CLASP**

**LIES FLAT TO THE LEG—NEVER
SLIPS, TEARS NOR UNFASTENS**

Sample pair, Silk 50c., Cotton 25c.
Mailed on receipt of price.

**GEO. FROST CO., Makers
Boston, Mass., U.S.A.**

ALWAYS EASY



**Will give you an erect figure, develop your
chest and make your lungs strong.**

Comfortable to wear, light and strong and fits like
a glove. Unlike any other shoulder brace you have
ever seen or tried. We absolutely guarantee it to
satisfy you in every way. If it doesn't, we will re-
fund your money.

Recommended by Physicians.
MADE FOR
Men, Boys, Ladies & Misses

Sold by all first-class dealers or sent
by mail, postpaid, if you wish.

PRICE:
Satin \$1.00—Silk \$1.50

When ordering give chest measure
around the body under the arms.

Send for Free Illustrated Book.
ILLINOIS SUSPENDER COMPANY,
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THREE \$2.50 SHIRTS FREE

To introduce "Model Shirts" in
every community we will make
to your measure three \$2.50
Model shirts and send them
Free to the first to write us from each locality
accepting our special introductory offer. Write
to-day for measurement blank, samples, and full
particulars. **MODEL SHIRT CO.**

45 Century Indianapolis, Ind.




You Cannot Lose

If you buy **KANSAS CO-OPERATIVE RE-
FINING CO.** stock now while it is selling

at 7 cents Per Share.

PAR VALUE, \$1.00. It will sell at 15 cents or higher
within a very short time, with good prospects of its sell-
ing at 50 cents to \$1.00 and paying Big Dividends almost
before you know it. This is a great independent oil re-
finery strictly co-operative and has great prospects. This
company owns a very valuable refining site and some of
the best oil lands in Kansas and has agreements with oil
companies to supply at least 500 barrels of crude oil per
day. Only a Limited Amount of Stock for Sale at Present
Price. Buy now, if you want to make good big money.
Write for "Co-operative Refining" Prospectus. **DON'T
WAIT.** Address,

**UNION SECURITY CO.,
347 Caff Bldg., CHICAGO, ILL.**

SELL GOODS BY MAIL

Greatest successes of recent years have been made by Mail-
Order firms. Note the large number of advertisements in weekly
and monthly publications; nearly all transact business through the
mails. For the beginner in Mail Order business, the principal
thing is to start right. By following our plan, which has been
tested for years, you are certain to start right; it tells how a profit-
able Mail Order business may be started; best line of goods for
beginner; hints on advertising, etc. Plan free to interested parties.
CENTRAL SUPPLY CO., 1002 S Grand Avenue, KANSAS CITY, MO.



150 Magic Tricks 10c

For 10 cents we will send you by return mail
150 Magic Tricks with cards, ribbons, rings, etc., all
clearly explained and illustrated that with only a little
practice you can easily perform them and be as great a
magician as Houdini or Kellar. No other method of enter-
taining is so effective, yet it is so easy to learn. We guarantee
success. Big Catalog of 1000 other tricks sent free with
each order. Get these tricks and be popular with your
friends. **B. DRAKE, Dept 608, 610 Jackson St., Chicago.**



FLASH LIKE THE GENUINE

Day or night. Solid gold mounting. You
can own a diamond equal in brilliancy to
any genuine stone at one-thirtieth the
cost.

BARODA DIAMONDS

stand acid test and expert examination.
We guarantee them. See them first
then pay. Write for catalogue.

**THE BARODA COMPANY,
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YOU CAN MAKE CIGARETTES LIKE THESE The TURKO CIGARETTE ROLLER

is the greatest and least costly for smokers. So simple that you can learn in a minute.
One Complete TURKO ROLLER sent post paid for Twenty-five cents.
Address: **CHARLES W. OLIVER, 95 William Street, New York**

' S M O K E '

Are you tired of the same old brand? Do you want a fragrant, delicious, mellow smoke that doesn't bite?
Try **"SMOKE."** A new mixture for the pipe that appeals to the most fastidious taste. Although more satisfying
than tobacco, it is not injurious because it **contains no Nicotine.** That poison, nicotine, is responsible
for your heavy head, clouded brain, bad-tasting mouth, foul breath, palpitating heart, disordered stomach.
You pay no penalty when you smoke **"SMOKE."** You do not know the luxury of smoking until you have tried
it. If your dealer won't supply you, write us at once for a 4-oz. box, exc. postpaid. Our Guarantee: If any test
can show you a trace of nicotine, we refund your money. **NEW YORK SMOKE CO., 33-37 Charles St., New York City.**



Gillette Safety Razor

This picture is self-explaining. It tells the story! The man who to-day shaves with a "GILLETTE," *shaves with comfort and with safety.*

Other men take chances, or are slaves to the barber habit.

Which kind of man are you?

A single trial will convince the most incredulous. It is not what we say alone, but what others say who use a Gillette Safety Razor, that will have with you the greatest weight. Ask the man who uses a Gillette and hear what he says.

\$5.00 Complete An Ideal Christmas Gift

The Razor is triple silver-plated; has 12 thin, flexible, highly tempered and keen double-edged blades. These blades are sharpened and ground by a secret process and require no honing or stropping. New Blades \$1.00 per Dozen.

Each Blade will give from Twenty to Forty Smooth and Delightful Shaves. You therefore have by using a Gillette Safety Razor 400 shaves without stropping, at less than 1 cent a shave.

Over 200,000 Now in Use

Ask your dealer for the Gillette Safety Razor. *Accept no substitute.* He can procure it for you.

Write to-day for our interesting booklet which explains our 30-day Free Trial Offer. Most dealers make this offer; if yours does not, we will.

GILLETTE SALES COMPANY

1155 Times Building,

42d St. and Broadway, New York



1/4 CARAT QUALITY
- A-1- \$ 80.00
\$14. DOWN
\$7. PER MONTH

OTHER QUALITIES
OF SAME SIZE
AS LOW AS \$ 60.

DIAMONDS - ON - CREDIT

T

HERE'S an erroneous idea abroad that all dealers doing a credit business are obliged to charge high prices to offset their losses.

True, most installment-dealers must and do charge two prices—but they follow ancient methods.

We have no losses worth mentioning because we refuse to do business with dishonest people at any price and are thus enabled to sell honest persons "On Credit" at practically cash prices.

Our methods will appeal particularly to those who are entitled to a "square deal."

Upon request we will send, subject to examination—express prepaid, a 1/4 carat diamond set in mounting like cut or in any standard 14-kt. solid gold mounting. It rings proves to be in every way satisfactory pay express agent \$14. If you would rather have goods sent by registered mail or at first writing desire to show that you mean business, send \$14 with order. Balance may be paid monthly or weekly.

Catalog No. 148 shows a wealth of diamonds from \$12 to \$1,400, also watches and a general line of jewelry. It's free.

Herbert L. Joseph & Co. *High-Class Jewelry Credit House*

213 (146) STATE STREET, CHICAGO
Established 1882 Responsibility, \$250,000.00

"GUNN" SECTIONAL BOOK CASES



"YOU DON'T GET DONE WHEN YOU BUY A GUNN"

THE GUNN IMPROVED SYSTEM

Awarded Gold Medal, World's Fair, St. Louis.

All doors removable and a case of six sections set up in two minutes without any tools. Designed for every home at a very reasonable cost.

YOU REALLY SHOULD GET THIS BOOKLET

It tells all about Gunn Sectional Bookcases—their very low prices, and the many artistic combinations that can be made (the cut shows one style).

Write to-day for this handsomely illustrated Booklet in colors—mailed free.

GUNN FURNITURE CO., Grand Rapids, Mich.

Manufacturers of Gunn Desks and Filing Cabinets

I WILL MAKE YOU PROSPEROUS

If you are honest and ambitious, write me today. No matter where you live or what your occupation has been, I will teach you the Real Estate business by mail; appoint you Special Representative of my Company in your town; start you in a profitable business of your own and help you make big money at once.

Unusual opportunity for men without capital to become independent for life. Valuable book and full particulars free. Write today.

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National Co-Operative Realty Co.
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REAL ESTATE WANTED

We can sell your property, no matter where located. We have over 500 active, competent, trained, expert real estate men in our immense organization, each constantly advertising and searching for prospective purchasers. If you want to make a quick cash sale or exchange, send full particulars at once. Address

WILLIAM W. FRY, Treasurer
National Co-Operative Realty Co.
401 Athenaeum Building CHICAGO

4% THE BANK THAT PAYS 4%

When you are offered a 300 per cent. investment look out!

Beware of big profits!

The normal return from safe investments is 4 per cent.

Some few pay a little more—many pay less—

A safe rule to go by is this:—

The higher the promised profit, beyond 4 per cent. the greater the reason for suspicion—

The small investor can much better afford to be content with a 4 per cent. compound interest return which he can get at the Peoples Savings Bank than to risk the loss of his savings through some reckless speculative venture—

Four per cent. and safety is a good investment—the best investment in the world for small savings.

Accounts may be started with any amount from \$1 up. Booklet V tells how to bank by mail. Write for it.

**CAPITAL, \$1,000,000
SURPLUS, \$1,000,000**

PEOPLES SAVINGS BANK
FOURTH AVE. AND WOOD ST.
PITTSBURGH, PA.

4% THE BANK THAT PAYS 4%

ALUMINUM TONE-ARM GRAPHOPHONE

A Disc Talking Machine With a
MELLOW TONE

Music lovers will find in the new 1906 MODEL DISC GRAPHOPHONES the most perfect Disc Talking Machine now on the market. By the use of the ALUMINUM TONE-ARM a superb quality of tone is secured.

EVERY MACHINE FULLY GUARANTEED

A
THEATRE
IN
YOUR
HOME

FOUR NEW MODELS

CHAMPION \$30

STERLING \$45

IMPERIAL \$75

MAJESTIC \$100

If you contemplate the purchase of a Talking Machine, you should be sure to get the best. The Graphophone is the best. It has received the highest awards wherever exhibited. "Grand Prix, Paris, 1900; Double Grand Prize, St. Louis, 1904."

IMPORTANT: The demand for these machines will be enormous. To secure an ALUMINUM TONE-ARM Graphophone orders should be placed at once.

Full information free to all who fill in, cut out and send at once attached coupon.

Stores
in
All
Princi-
pal
Cities.

Dealers
Every-
where.



COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH CO., Gen'l. Creators of the Talking Machine Industry. Owners of the Fundamental Patents. Largest Mfrs. in the World.



(A) COLUMBIA PHONOGRAPH CO., Gen'l.,
No. 90-92 West Broadway, New York

Dear Sirs:—Please send me free complete details concerning your new ALUMINUM TONE-ARM Disc Graphophones.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

Ainslee's

"THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS"

FOR DECEMBER

The December number of AINSLEE's will be a Christmas magazine; but that is not all that it will be. We have endeavored to make it essentially a climax of the policy that has directed the magazine during 1905, and at the same time a starting point for the further development of that policy in 1906. A summary of what the December number contains will speak for it more eloquently than pages of talk. These are the features:

LLOYD OSBOURNE

contributes a delightful Christmas story, entitled "Mr. Bob,"

O. HENRY

author of "Cabbages and Kings," a remarkable tale called "Blind Man's Holiday,"

EDITH WHARTON

author of "The House of Mirth," and the most notable figure in current American fiction, a Christmas story, "The Introducers,"

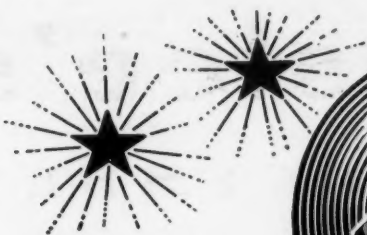
MRS. C. N. WILLIAMSON

one of the authors of "My Friend the Chauffeur," "The Lightning Conductor," and "The Princess Passes," a Christmas story of unusual merit called "The Man in the Moon."

Other Christmas stories will be by OWEN OLIVER and MARY B. MULLETT. The table of contents will also have a strong and interesting story by EDITH MACVANE and one by ANNE O'HAGAN. MRS. WILSON WOODROW will continue her "Conversations with Egeria."

MARIE VAN VORST'S remarkable serial "The Warreners," will also be continued.

Essays appropriate to the season will be by Julien Gordon and Anne Rittenhouse.



WE TAP THE HEART

of the famous Jersey farming district.

We pay cash to the farmer, and cash is a wizard to get the finest that grows.

If we charged you a dollar a can instead of the dime it costs you, we could not give you any higher grade material than you find in

Campbell's SOUPS

But this is just half.

We give this high grade material high grade treatment. We secure to you the natural strength and quality.

We make 21 kinds.

Each kind is determined by allowing some one element to predominate.

For instance: Chicken Soup is unmistakably chicken soup on account of the chicken—and so on all through the list.

The principal and the secondary elements are all present in powerful condensation.

And, best of all, to prepare, in just one minute, enough for the average family, all you need do is

**"Just add a can of
hot water and serve"**



**Joseph Campbell Company
Camden, N. J., U. S. A.**

The man in the moon came down too soon.
He found a treat—but had no spoon.



What is *your* knowledge of Diamonds? Could *you* tell the proper price of a genuine Diamond? Could *you* detect a brilliant, imitation stone from the genuine? If not, don't take risks when you buy. Make sure of getting a genuine Diamond at the lowest market price, by ordering from a house of *national reputation*. Ours is the oldest Diamond House in the Trade. We give a guarantee of genuineness with every Diamond we sell, and to persons of good character we give terms of credit. *Transactions strictly confidential.*

20% Down and 10% Per Month

By importing Diamonds "in the rough", polishing them here and selling them direct to consumers, we can quote prices 20% lower than any competitor. If you can duplicate our values at your dealer's, we will take back your purchase and refund your money. *Send for our free catalog number 17.*

J. M. LYON & CO., ESTABLISHED 1843 65-67-69 Nassau Street, New York

DUPONT BRUSHES



Outlast two or three ordinary brushes—but cost **no more!** The bristles are the life of a brush—bristles in Dupont brushes are the finest procurable. The name "DUPONT" on a brush guarantees quality, wear, and absolute satisfaction. The product of the largest and most thoroughly equipped factory in the world.

Hundreds of styles and sizes—in all woods, R. E. A. L. EBONY, bone, pearl, ivory—for hair, teeth, face, hands, clothes, etc. Sold by Dry Goods, Department, Drug and Jewelry Stores. If not at your dealer's, write us and we will see that you are supplied no matter where you live.

FREE BOOKLET

about Brushes and Bristles, how to select and take care of Brushes, etc., sent on request.

E. DUPONT & CO.,
PARIS, BEAUFVAIS, LONDON
New York Office, 36-38 Washington Place

A little story about a bed, beautifully illustrated, in our book entitled
"EZYBEDS OF KAPOK"
Light, soft, luxurious, hygienic, silky, downy fluff that comes all the way from JAVA. It tells you how we sell them on
30 NIGHTS' TRIAL
Express prepaid. It tells you why and offers to prove that
EZYBED MATTRESSES
are the best in the world. Used exclusively in thousands of Convents, Hospitals, Sanitariums, etc.
10 pounds lighter than any other mattress
May we send you a copy of the book?
THE EZYBED MATTRESS CO.,
"Dept. D." Cincinnati, O.

Kneipp Malt-Coffee

The Original Coffee Substitute.

MAKES ROSY CHEEKS.

Kneipp Malt-Coffee originated with the famous Kneipp Cure. Those who took the cure had to renounce coffee. To wean them forever from the injurious beverage Father Kneipp invented the original coffee substitute, KNEIPP MALT-COFFEE.

Its success has been phenomenal. Europe esteems it more delicious than coffee and uses more of it than coffee and all other substitutes combined. Eighty million packages sold annually.

Kneipp Malt-Coffee is not an **insipid imitation** of coffee, but the only genuine substitute with full coffee flavor and aroma.

It is made of the choicest barley, malted and caramelized by Father Kneipp's own process. It has all the strengthening value of the best malt tonic, with all the palatableness of the richest coffee.

If you boil it, you spoil it.

Kneipp Malt-Coffee must be made right to taste right. Use two tablespoonfuls to each pint of water. Bring just to the boiling point, then let simmer for six minutes. Serve with cream and sugar to taste.

Free Trial.

Fill out the accompanying coupon, mail it to us, and we will send, postpaid, a trial package of Kneipp Malt-Coffee, enough for ten cups.

KNEIPP MALT FOOD CO.

78 Hudson Street
New York

Dept. G



Lebr. Kneipp

CUT OUT
Kindly send me free trial package of Kneipp Coffee.
NAME _____ ADDRESS _____ Dealer's Name and Address _____



We have just issued a new catalogue which is replete with beautiful illustrations and plans of attractive home libraries.

It also describes new units which we have recently added to our line, including desk, cupboard, music, drawer, magazine and table sections, besides clearly explaining certain mechanical features of construction and finish that influence careful buyers to purchase Globe-Wernicke cases—the only kind equipped with non-binding door equalizers.

Bookcase units furnished with leaded or plain glass doors, and in whole or three-quarter length sections.

Name of authorized agent in your city mailed on request for catalogue. Where not represented, we ship on approval, freight paid. Uniform prices everywhere. Write for catalogue 105 J

The Globe-Wernicke Co. Cincinnati

BRANCH STORES: New York, Chicago, Boston

Agencies in about one thousand cities

LAKEWOOD

The Fashionable Winter Resort of America

REACHED ONLY BY

NEW JERSEY CENTRAL

Best Hotels • Golf • Polo • Outdoor Sports

BOOKLET ON APPLICATION TO C. M. BURT, GENERAL PASSENGER
AGENT ————— 143 LIBERTY STREET, NEW YORK CITY

4 full quarts \$3^{.20} EXPRESS PREPAID

We are distillers and sell Hayner Whiskey direct to you. There are no dealers or middlemen to water or adulterate it. You are sure of getting absolutely pure whiskey and you save the dealers' enormous profits. Pure Hayner Whiskey has no superior at any price and yet it costs less than dealers charge for inferior adulterated stuff.

*** OUR OFFER ***

We will send you in a plain sealed case with no marks to show contents, Four full quart bottles of Hayner Whiskey, Rye or Bourbon, for \$3.20, and we will pay the express charges. Take it home and sample it, have your doctor test it, every bottle if you wish. Then if you don't find it just as we say and perfectly satisfactory, ship it back to us at our expense and your \$3.20 will be promptly refunded. How could any offer be fairer? You don't risk a cent.

Orders for Ariz., Cal., Col., Idaho, Mont., Nev., N. Mex., Ore., Utah, Wash., or Wyo., must be on the basis of 4 Quarts for \$4.00, by Express Prepaid or 20 Quarts for \$15.20 by Freight Prepaid.

Hayner Whiskey IS ABSOLUTELY PURE

You must believe this sworn affidavit. It won't admit of any doubt.

STATE OF OHIO COUNTY OF MIAMI

"That he is Chief Storekeeper in charge of U. S. Government Employees, numbering four Storekeepers, four Gaugers, and one Stamp Deputy, at Hayner's Registered Distillery, No. 2, Tenth Dist., Ohio, and that he has been employed in said capacity at different times since 1867.

"That the grain used in said distillery is the very best, and that the Hayner Whiskey produced is absolutely pure.

"That the U. S. Government, in the person of ten of its employees, has complete charge of Hayner Whiskey, from the grain that is used until the whiskey is fully matured and removed from the warehouses for shipment.

Sworn to before me and subscribed in my presence this 10th day of February, A.D. 1905

David L. Lee



D. Johnson
Deputy Clerk of the Court of Common Pleas,
Miami County, Ohio.

Distillery at Troy, Ohio. Established 1866. Write our nearest office today.

THE HAYNER DISTILLING COMPANY,
DAYTON, O. ST. LOUIS, MO. ST. PAUL, MINN. ATLANTA, GA.





Block

*Block is the best card game
we have ever published*
Parker Brothers
inc.

We cannot too strongly recommend to you the new game BLOCK. It is a new game of extraordinary fascination. **It is immensely popular** both here and in Europe and is now the largest selling game in the world. It is easily learned and captivating from the very start. The play is full of life, spirit and constant opportunity for good judgment. **It will delight your guests.** You will not only like it, but like it very much.

At all Dealers, or mailed promptly by
us on receipt of price

BLOCK

CLUB EDITION With the 800 cards in different colors **75c.**
Plain Edition, 50 cts.

The sooner you play **BLOCK**, the sooner you will have found a new delight in games.

PARKER BROTHERS (INC.), SALEM, MASS., U. S. A.
Flatiron Building, NEW YORK, and LONDON, Eng.

Sole Owners and Makers of **BLOCK, PIT, TOOT, NUMERICA, BID, PILLOW-DEX, PING-PONG**, etc.



SWIFT'S PREMIUM CALENDAR

JANUARY 1906

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31

FEBRUARY

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28

MARCH

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31

APRIL

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17
18 19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30

MAY

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31

JUNE

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30

JULY

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31

AUGUST

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24 25
26 27 28 29 30 31

SEPTEMBER

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29

OCTOBER

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31

NOVEMBER

S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30

DECEMBER

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1 2 3 4 5 6
7 8 9 10 11 12
13 14 15 16 17 18
19 20 21 22 23 24
25 26 27 28 29 30 31

Swift's Premium Calendar for 1906

Attractive pastels—handsomely lithographed in twelve colors—size 12x35 inches—reproduced from the original drawings by Philip Boileau, a French artist whose art subjects are in large demand in this country.

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